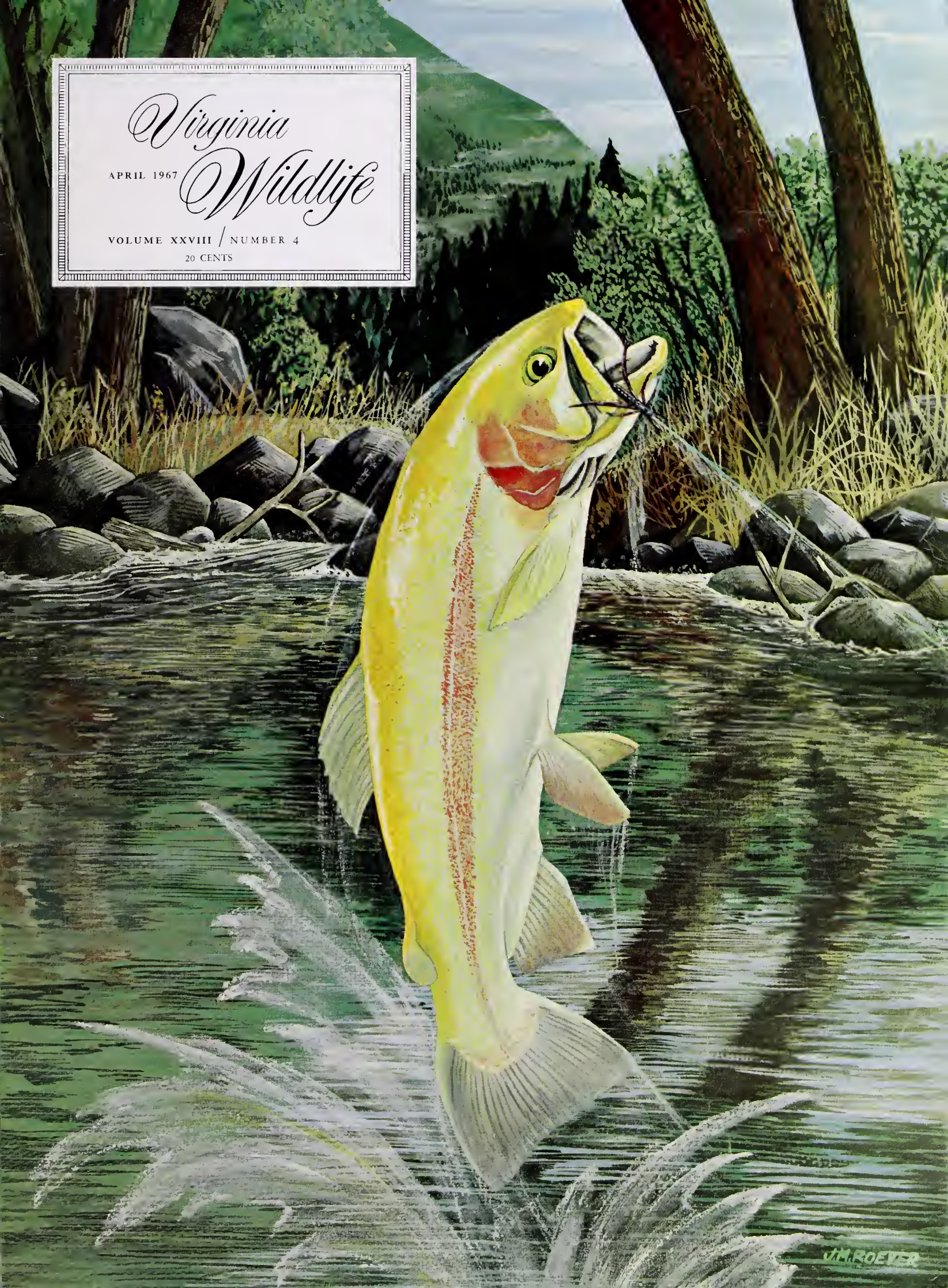


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Virginia Wildlife

*Dedicated to the Conservation of
Virginia's Wildlife and Related Natural Resources
and to the Betterment of
Outdoor Recreation in Virginia*

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APRIL

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COVER: Introducing to Virginia anglers, the *golden rainbow!* It occurs perhaps once among every several thousand rainbow trout produced from normally colored hatchery brood stock. Selective breeding can produce a strain in which the golden color phase predominates. Anglers will find some of these golden beauties this year, among normally colored fish, in Big Tumbling Creek and Douthat State Park Lake. Our artist: J. M. Roever, Cocoa Beach, Florida.

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EDITORIAL

Spring Fever

THIS is a poor time for writing editorials, or anything else for that matter. Competition is far too keen, distractions too compelling, out-of-doors.

Patiently, and faithful to our mundane tasks, we have outlasted Ol' Man Winter's passing. Now we would bathe both body and soul in wholesome air and gentle sunshine, immerse ourselves in exquisite stillness, feel the haunting loneliness of open spaces, rejoice in the fleeting loveliness of raindrop patterns upon the water. It's time to go a-fishin'!

Of course, it is not so much the fish that matter, for fishing is more than merely catching fish. They lure and beckon, to where waves splash in the sunshine and eternal waters flow, but what really matters is what happens to the fisherman who heeds their siren song.

Our forebears came from out-of-doors—at least I am sure mine did—and we need to return occasionally, to keep in touch with old sources and realities, renew perspectives, strengthen our faith, regain our composure, and retain our sanity. We find deep satisfaction in the simple art of fishing.

We are by nature a gregarious species, with a compulsion to seek out the company of others of our own kind, but to appreciate or even tolerate the joys of today's massive togetherness we need a chance to be lonely once in a while, too. We need time and a place to think, without other people intruding upon our thoughts. We need to see and feel grass that does not have to be mowed. We need to be able to hear the singing of birds, without consciously listening for it.

Most of all we need changes of pace. We need to experience solitude, that we may be able to cope with the multitude; silence, as an antidote for too much wordiness; peace, that we may not break under the stress of conflict.

Willows on the banks are green again. The breeze is soft, and the air is sweet. Flowing waters beckon, and fish lurking in their mysterious depths are excuse enough for anyone to accept the urgent invitation. It's time to go a-fishin'!—J. F. Mc.

"Fishing is a chance to wash one's soul with pure air, with the rush of the brook, or with the shimmer of sun on the blue water.

"It brings meekness and inspiration from the scenery of nature, charity toward tackle makers, patience toward fish, a mockery of profits and egos, a quieting of hate, a rejoicing that you do not have to decide a darned thing until next week.

"And it is discipline in the equality of man—for all men are equal before fish."

Herbert Hoover

Fishing for Fun and To Wash Your Soul. Random House, New York, 1963. "Foreward," p. 11.

LETTERS

Wants Early Bear Season

I want to urge the Commission to review the "bear hunting with dogs" situation.

By the extension of deer season to two weeks in Augusta County, it has pushed our "bear with dogs season" so late that most of the bears have hibernated, and winter has set in, making it too disagreeable to hunt.

I know that the Commission is faced with many problems and requests from different groups of hunters and fishermen, but I feel as hundreds more here do, that we are not getting a fair show. I assure you that there isn't a hunter that wants to see bears or deer or any other game hunted to the point of extinction, but they do expect a little sport in return for their license money.

If the Commission could see fit to give "bear with dogs" one week before deer season here, I assure you that you would see a greater revenue in license money and more support of the Commission.

O. Martin Wheeler
Lyndhurst

Biggest Pickerel

I read in this month's issue you would answer questions if we sent them in.

Recently I caught a 7 pound pickerel. What is the state record for this fish? (I entered it in the contest you sponsor.)

Jack James
Hopewell

The current state record for pickerel is 7 pounds, established in 1965 by J. T. Harcum with his fish from Lake Smith. Yours, of course, ties this record. You should have received your certificate in the mail by now.
—Ed.

Restrictions on Rifles

IN the February issue of *Virginia Wildlife* magazine I see you are going to answer questions affecting the sportsman. My question is this: If a sportsman wants to hunt varmints in the counties east of the Blue Ridge, could you list all of the counties and tell what caliber rifle you can use? It is my understanding that some counties say no rifle larger than a 22 rim fire. Some say 22 caliber, and some say larger rifles can be used.

I think this is a very good idea on giving answers to questions. I would appreciate the information very much. I have been a subscriber for about 15 years and like the magazine fine.

Philip S. Wood
Richmond

The restrictions on use of rifles in certain counties are set by local legislative acts of the General Assembly rather than by Commission regulations, and in some cases the General Assembly has merely authorized the boards of supervisors of certain counties to enact ordinances restricting the use of rifles. Since some of these governing bodies can enact, and repeal, such ordinances without notifying this Commission, there is always the possibility that an error may crop up in the information we publish on the subject. However, the best information we have is summarized on page 3 of our Summary of Virginia Game Laws, which is available on request and at most hunting license agencies.—Ed.

Right Place

Right Time

For Fish



By ANN PILCHER
Editorial Assistant

GIVEN a reasonable amount of basic skill, angling success is largely a matter of being in the right place at the right time. There is no sure-fire way to arrange such a happy coincidence, especially when it is necessary to plan a fishing trip some time in advance. The element of chance remains, but there is a way to improve the odds. Good fishing may not be as easy to forecast as the time of tomorrow's sunrise, but it may still be a lot more predictable than you think.

For the past five years the Virginia Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries has issued a Weekly Fishing Report under the direction of Information Officer Harry Gillam. Disseminated from mid-April through mid-October to sportsmen through the generous assistance of wire services, newspapers, radio and TV stations, this weekly release provides Virginia anglers with a current picture of fishing conditions on certain major streams of the state.

Except for saltwater news, furnished by Mr. Vernon E. Stevens of Virginia Beach, game wardens who patrol the streams provide data for the reports. Height and general condition of the water, fishing pressure and angler success are included, plus occasional tips on bait and fishing methods. To make reports uniform and meaningful, fishing success is rated by percentage of anglers catching keeper-sized fish: excellent, over 75%; good, 50%-75%; fair, 25%-50%; poor, 0%-25%.

Fishing in various waters seems, with minor fluctuations, to follow fairly regular seasonal patterns. Even though no one can predict results with certainty, information on past angler success is a valuable guide in planning future fishing trips or vacations. We hope the following review of 1966 fishing, taken from the Weekly Fishing Reports, will help this year's anglers decide when and where to go for best results.

* * * *

During the last half of May, 1966, the famed SHENANDOAH smallmouth bass fishing was excellent in the river's North and South Forks. So were snuffish yields. Success through most of June was good, many creeled bass weighing

four pounds. Toward June's end an algae coating began to accumulate on Shenandoah waters, and heavy bloom covered the river through July, August and early September. This condition, combined with hot weather and abnormally low water levels, reduced smallmouth and bream fishing to fair the last four months of the reporting season. Anglers in the main river took fair catches of largemouth bass during the fourth week of May and a few catfish throughout the summer. Other main stem fishing was poor. Catfish creels in June were good in the South Fork. Although poor later in the season, Shenandoah's May sucker and rock bass catches were fair, with North Fork rock bass fishing rocketing to excellent the last week of the month. Rated outstanding in early June was daytime bow and arrow carp gigging. Largemouth fishing peaked the second week in May, when excellent catches came from the South Fork. It was from the South Fork, too, on September 3rd, that the first confirmed catch of legal-sized muskellunge came—a 29 inch, 6 pound specimen. Shenandoah crappie fishing was slow all season.

Fly fishermen made good catches of 6"-10" brook and 18" rainbow trout during the last half of April in the RAPIDAN AND STAUNTON RIVERS' Fish-for-Fun section. May and June creels were fair. Angling activity through most of July and August was considered too light to establish a success record, but catch on these two streams was fair when the trout season ended October 15, one hour after sunset.

BULLPASTURE brown and rainbow trout, averaging 10" in length, were being creeled in fair numbers when the fishing report began in mid-April. Three rather widely separated reports, May 12, July 7 and August 11, rated Bullpasture trout fishing excellent. Catches the third week of June were good; July and August mostly fair; other weeks poor.

JACKSON RIVER'S trout fishing record paralleled that of the Bullpasture. Smallmouth catches were fair the fourth and fifth weeks of May, poor the rest of the season. Mid-May through Mid-June brought good rock bass results. With the

exception of two poor reports, rock bass fishing the rest of the summer was fair. Sunfish catches were best during May and the first half of September.

COWPASTURE rock bass fishing, excellent the second week of May, good through June, was followed by several weeks of light catches. In mid-August, another month of good fishing returned. April chain pickerel catches were rated fair to poor. Second week of May through third week of June found Cowpasture anglers bringing home good-sized smallmouth creels. Third week of August and second week of October were equally good producers. Sunfish catches, rated excellent in early May, were good thereafter through the first week of July. Other weeks alternated between fair and good. April and May sucker fishing was fair. Evidently not significant enough to be reported during June and July, sucker creels the third week of August rose to good.

Stocked with largemouth and sunfish, 8.8-acre Bath County

of Pulaski reeled in a 27" musky weighing 4 pounds 8 ounces.

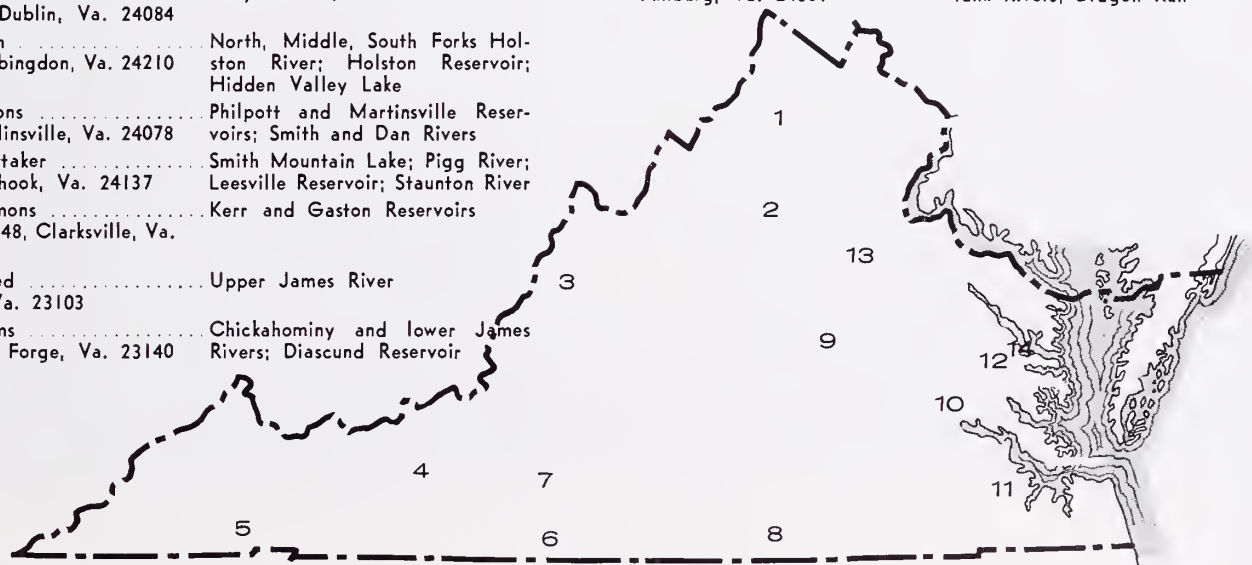
NEW RIVER rock bass catches were fair from June through October. Smallmouth and catfish success nearly equalled Claytor's results, but other fishing was generally poorer in the New than in Claytor.

The three forks of the HOLSTON, which, together with New River, constitute the main streams of southwest Virginia's Appalachian country, produced good crappie and bluegill catches through August; fair rock bass and carp angling. April and May catfish and sucker fishing was fairly good. During April, May and June the Middle and South Forks of the Holston yielded fair catches of largemouth and smallmouth bass. North Fork fishing was generally poor.

SOUTH HOLSTON RESERVOIR, one of the storage reservoirs in the TVA chain, lies on the Virginia-Tennessee

WARDEN REPORTER	WATERS
1 J. W. Simpson Box 180, Front Royal, Va. 22630	Shenandoah River
2 R. S. Crigler Rt. 231, Box 3-A Madison, Va. 22727	Fish-for-Fun sections of Rapidan and Staunton Rivers in Shenandoah Park
3 D. R. Miller Rt. 2, Hot Springs, Va. 24445	Bullpasture, Jackson and Cowpasture Rivers; Douthat Lake; Lake Bacova
4 D. A. McLeod Box 185, Dublin, Va. 24084	Claytor Lake; New River
5 R. A. Smith Box 652, Abingdon, Va. 24210	North, Middle, South Forks Holston River; Holston Reservoir; Hidden Valley Lake
6 E. T. Lemons Box 1, Collinsville, Va. 24078	Philpott and Martinsville Reservoirs; Smith and Dan Rivers
7 J. D. Whittaker Rt. 1, Penhook, Va. 24137	Smith Mountain Lake; Pigg River; Leesville Reservoir; Staunton River
8 G. P. Simmons P. O. Box 248, Clarksville, Va. 23927	Kerr and Gaston Reservoirs
9 S. W. Breed Manakin, Va. 23103	Upper James River
10 B. L. Adams Providence Forge, Va. 23140	Chickahominy and lower James Rivers; Diascund Reservoir

WARDEN REPORTER	WATERS
11 W. E. Lankford P. O. Box 1, Franklin, Va. 23851	Back Bay; Norfolk and Suffolk City Water Works Reservoirs; Blackwater and Nottoway Rivers
12 C. T. Bland Shanghai, Va. 23158	Mattaponi and Pamunkey Rivers
13 F. C. Boggs Rt. 3, Box 143 Fredericksburg, Va. 22401	Upper Rappahannock
14 B. U. Miller Amburg, Va. 24501	Lower Rappahannock and Piankatank Rivers; Dragon Run



LAKE BACOVA yielded excellent bass and bream catches after its October 1 opening.

Sunfish creels from CLAYTOR LAKE, 4800-acre power impoundment near Radford on the New River, were consistently good throughout the summer season. White bass catches, fair from April through July, picked up the third week of August and remained good into October. Claytor produces the largest wall-eyed pike in the state, up to 17 pounds, but quantity of fish creeled last summer from April through August was only fair; September and October catches were poor. Smallmouth anglers enjoyed good fishing the third week of August; yields were only fair other weeks. Largemouth catches alternated between fair and poor most of the summer, with the most consistent record of fair fishing coming in August and early September. Mid-May through mid-June and first half of September brought good catfish strings. Claytor's spring and summer crappie and carp creels were fair. During the last week of May, C. J. Bryant

border near Bristol. Smallmouth anglers found lake fishing good in April through mid-May, largemouth catches good through the end of May. Both species were taken in good numbers the second week in August. Crappie and bluegill catches were consistently good from April through August; autumn fishing dropped to fair. Other Holston activity showed carp fishing good through June; sporadically good results for catfish; April and May sucker catches fair, later creels poor; walleye and pickerel fishing poor. White perch strings alternated between fair and poor.

Most April, May and June fishing was good at HIDDEN VALLEY LAKE, which is stocked with rainbow trout. Declining through July and August, angling success was fair to poor in September and October.

Famous for its big rainbows, PHILPOTT RESERVOIR anglers found July trout and April-May crappie fishing good. Smallmouth and largemouth catches from this 2800-

(Continued on Page 21)

HUNTING THE KING

In The Spring

By C. H. SHAFFER
Game Management Field Coordinator

ON April 24, 1961, the Virginia Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries introduced the hunters of the Old Dominion to an exciting new sport. After years of prior investigations, it was decided to experiment in the field with spring gobbler hunting, a type of sport that had been popular for many years with the turkey hunters in the states in the deep Southland. In order to determine experimentally the pros and cons of this type of hunting in Virginia, the Commission decided to initiate the program on a limited scale. The hunting of bearded turkeys (only on rare occasions is the female of the species bearded) was restricted to six mornings on Camp A. P. Hill, Camp Pickett, and the Commission-owned Gathright Area in Bath County.

The following year (1962) the experimental study was expanded to include the entire counties of Amelia, Chesterfield, Nottoway and Powhatan. During the next three spring-times, gobbler seasons were expanded significantly as more and more counties accepted and requested this brand new sport. Another milestone was attained when in the springtime of 1966 the Game Commission extended the season to two full weeks in a total of 61 counties. At a recent meeting the Commission set a 1967 spring season embracing 13 days (including three Saturdays) from April 29 through May 13 in 74 counties. It was apparent that Virginia's incubator baby had grown to virile manhood in six short years.

The tremendous increase in the acceptance and popularity of this new sport is convincingly demonstrated by the gradual and spectacular increase in spring gobbler harvest.

Chart I
SPRING GOBBLER HARVEST

Year	Gobblers Checked
1961	34
1962	129
1963	280
1964	403
1965	485
1966	641

Total 1,972

In the initial experimental year of 1961, a total of 34 adult gobblers were collected on the three study areas. During the two-week 1966 season, sportsmen checked in a total of 641 gobblers despite cold rainy weather which drenched gobblers and hunters alike and doubtless adversely affected the hunter success. In 1961 all hunters were checked in and out of the three open management areas; thus it was simple to ascertain that a total of 1,446 man-mornings were accumulated in pursuit of the wily gobblers. By utilizing the same man-day to gobbler-success ratio, it is estimated that over 27,000 mornings of recreation were provided during the 1966 season alone and 84,000 hunter-mornings for the six-year period.

When the spring gobbler season was first proposed, there were relatively few advocates for this revolutionary form of hunting. Most sportsmen apparently had a wait-and-see attitude since it was an entirely new technique at a strange

time of the year. Today there appear to be thousands of starry-eyed converts to spring gobbler hunting. Many hunters now prefer it to the fall season and actually save their turkey tabs hoping to harvest a twenty-pound tom in the spring-time.

Admittedly, spring turkey seasons are still controversial. Springtime hunting has not been accepted by all turkey hunters in all sections of Virginia. There remain sincere and conscientious sportsmen who are opposed to any form of hunting at this time of the year. In a number of Piedmont counties local governing bodies have steadfastly insisted that the Game Commission keep their counties closed to spring turkey hunting.

For over a decade, especially during the past six experimental years, game biologists have attempted to accumulate facts and figures on all aspects of the spring gobbler



Only bearded turkeys may be killed during the spring season. Once the hens have begun to nest, such magnificent old toms as this are expendable.

season. By operating turkey hunter contact stations, by sending out questionnaires, through intensive observations in the field, and by analyzing all available data, a great deal of positive information has been recorded. Before the spring gobbler seasons were tested, some sportsmen presented a number of basic objections which we shall discuss briefly.

Detrimental effect on the wild turkey populations. Spring gobbler seasons are set long after most hens have mated. It is a known fact that one mating is sufficient for a clutch of eggs, and thereafter the large adult gobbler is biologically expendable. It would be theoretically possible to harvest every adult gobbler in Virginia, after they have performed their breeding function, without detrimental effects upon this year's nesting success or future populations. By next breeding season, this year's juvenile toms will be ready and able to collect their own harems of hens.

If the reader will carefully analyze Chart II below, he may draw his own conclusions of whether the spring season

has had detrimental effect on over-all turkey populations.

Chart II

FALL AND WINTER RECORDED TURKEY HARVEST

	1961-62	1962-63	1963-64	1964-65	1965-66	1966-67
East of Blue Ridge	2,321	2,016	804*	904*	867*	1,723**
West of Blue Ridge	1,490	1,066	1,007	2,362	2,262	2,298
Total	3,811	3,082	1,811	3,266	3,129	4,021
Spring Gobblers	129	280	403	485	641	Forth-coming
GRAND TOTAL	3,940	3,362	2,214	3,751	3,770	4,021***

* Season shortened one month by delayed opening.

** Two weeks season.

*** Incomplete report; gobbler season spring of 1967 forthcoming.

It is sufficient to emphasize that despite the harvest of 641 gobblers in the spring of 1966, the fall kill of 4,021 turkeys represents the second highest state-wide kill ever recorded since the compulsory checking system became effective in 1951 (16 years).

In reality fall populations of turkeys are dependent on many factors, including the number of available hens present and their nesting success. Most field workers are convinced that the weather which occurs during the

attempted to call up a "loud-mouthed gobbler" in the spring is so excited and intent on collecting his trophy that he would seldom consider shooting rabbit, squirrel, or quail. He would be "cutting his own throat" by turning his attention to other game and scaring away his big gobbler.

Edibility of spring gobblers: After numerous interviews with successful spring hunters and analyzing hundreds of questionnaires, it was concluded that approximately 75 percent of the hunters thought their spring gobblers were as edible as turkeys collected in the fall.

Much of the accumulated information involved the actual hunting techniques which have gradually become common knowledge among Virginia's new breed of spring gobbler advocates. The turkey hunting technique which differed so drastically from the fall methods had to be first acquired, mastered and later taught to friends and hunting buddies. A new avid generation of turkey hunters has evolved, with their boxes, bones and diaphragms, to yelp or call in the big bronze birds. It was soon learned that camouflaged clothing and careful stalking were necessary for success. The favorite weapon for most spring hunters has been the 12 gauge shotgun, loaded with high velocity fours or sixes. It was soon discovered that an individual gobbler could be either shrewd or stupid on occasions, but could rapidly recover



New skills and techniques had to be acquired for successful springtime gobbler hunting. A new generation of turkey hunters has evolved, with renewed interest in the art and paraphernalia of turkey calling.

initial rearing of the young is the most important factor affecting turkey populations in the fall, given an adequate carryover of *hen* turkeys from the previous fall.

Hen kill and nest destruction: Obviously, employees of the Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries may be the last to hear about certain game law violations. The writer has heard of only two convictions involving illegal hens in the spring of the year. In both cases the hunters admitted their mistakes to game wardens. In contrast, the 1965-66 fall kill of 3,129 turkeys included 1,920 hens, 61 percent of the total kill. It is intoxicating to theorize and compute the breeding potential of those 1,920 hens!

In six years only two turkey nests were reported to have been discovered by spring gobbler hunters—one on Gathright and the other on Cheatham Annex.

Detrimental effect on other game species: No concrete information has been uncovered, but the kill of other game is believed to be insignificant. Any sportsman who has ever

and escape. The surest target has always been the patriotic turkey head of red, white, or blue.

Spring bearded turkey seasons have permitted Virginia's sportsmen to collect hundreds of large, handsome trophies. In 1962 the weights of 129 gobblers averaged 18.5 pounds. For those interested in wild turkey meat the 1,972 gobblers harvested in six years weighed an estimated 36,500 pounds (18 tons).

During recent years much emphasis is being placed on outdoor recreation. The objective of most land-use agencies has been to provide more "man days" of recreation. Spring gobbler hunting has proven to be a new *high quality* sport, which has already provided thousands of days of exciting outdoor recreation for the hunters of the Old Dominion. At the same time, it has been demonstrated conclusively that we can have a spring gobbler season without any detrimental effects upon fall turkey populations. Misquoting an ancient adage, "We *can* have our cake and eat it, too!"

CHANGES HIT TWO TROUT STREAMS

By OZZIE WORLEY
Roanoke



TROUT fishermen in the hundreds, who are lured as if by magic to two Botetourt County streams each opening day, had some surprises on the April 1 kickoff this year.

They may like what has happened to Jennings Creek, one of the streams. But they may grouse over what is occurring on the other, North Creek.

On Jennings, a series of gabion dams has been constructed to provide better cover for trout. The dams were built at intervals along the creek, from its confluence with Middle Creek upstream to where McFalls Creek flows into it.

Now—to that part that the anglers may frown about—a big part of North Creek is closed to trout fishing. This section begins where North meets Jennings, and extends upstream for about three miles to a point just below the North Creek Campgrounds.

The closure will be necessary because of a road-widening project that will see approximately \$120,000 spent this year. The U. S. Forest Service has entered into a contract with an Orange, Virginia, construction firm to do the job.

All of North Creek and a big part of Jennings lie within the Jefferson National Forest.



Some gabions serve as breaks in the stream, producing swift races and quiet backwaters.

Gabions are made of rocks held together in wire enclosures. They are not expected to improve water quality or quantity, but they may provide greater areas in which trout can disperse, and thus increase chances for their survival.



North Creek is one of the most popular—if not the most—in Virginia's mountain country. In fact, on some opening days in the past traffic was so heavy on the narrow road along the stream that state police had to be summoned to untangle it.

But all is not lost because of the road construction. The uppermost two and one-half miles of the creek—beyond the road job—was stocked heavier than usual with trout, spokesmen for the Jefferson Forest said. However, anglers have to take a round-about way to get there. They have to go to Natural Bridge Station, cross the James River and take the Arnolds Valley road via Cave Mountain Lake. This somewhat torturous road intersects with the North Creek road near the campgrounds.

Even though troutermen may be disappointed over the loss of so much of North Creek, they may find some compensation in the gabions on Jennings.

These dams, made from rocks held in wire enclosures, are something new. Fact is, those on Jennings—and comparable ones on Big Stony Creek in Wise County—are the first that the Game Commission's Fish Division has given its blessing to.

Jack Hoffman, division chief, planned the dams in cooperation with the Forest Service. Those on Jennings were built, in accordance with Hoffman's recommendations, by youths from the Federal boys' camp in Arnolds Valley.

The dams are in several shapes and sizes. Some serve, more or less, as regular dams. That is, deep pools have formed back of them, and swift water pours forth at the overflow point. Others serve as "breaks" in the stream, creating places where trout can rest or seek cover.

The gabions are expected to be a real asset during low

water periods. Also, some of them were built in flat parts of the stream that heretofore offered few hiding places for fish.

"We'll know more about what the gabions will, and will not, do after they have been in use for a year or so," says the fish division's Hoffman.

Hoffman, taking note of the work being done on North Creek, had some reservations over what this may do to the trout waters.

He said that careless blasting or excavation could cause silt to accumulate, damaging the creek's aquatic life.

However, Malcolm Edwards, the Jefferson Forest's wildlife biologist, minimized this. He said that blasting will not be permitted in the stream and no road-building equipment will be permitted in the water.

If these restrictions are not followed, Edwards said, the contractor must stop work.

The project, which will see the North Creek road widened to two lanes and the first 700 feet hard-surfaced, is expected to take about one year to complete.

As part of the job, pull-outs for fishermen's cars will be constructed at each 300- to 400-yard interval. A second project next year is scheduled for the stream. The bridges will be widened or replaced under this contract.

Although the construction area will be barricaded to traffic this trout season, the work may be far enough along to open the road—at least partially—to hunters this November, forest spokesmen said.

It's a sure bet, though, that troutermen—especially those born and bred to North—will miss its lower reaches greatly this season. Many of them very likely will settle for Jennings, meaning a multiplied traffic problem there.

Some gabions serve as regular dams, creating deep pools, and small "waterfalls" at the overflow points.



THERE is a green "bottom" at the foot of Jackson Avenue in Lexington where willow branches trail into a stream that was named "Sarah's Run" before the Revolution for the girl named Sarah Woods.

It is barely a half-mile from busy downtown, but it is owned by the wild things which live there: the starlings and squirrels and woodpeckers with their violent internecine squabbles over the holes in the honey-combed willows; the creatures which crawl or burrow or hop in the grass and the day lilies, or tunnel in the rich sandy banks.

All the busy life of the place revolves around Sarah's Creek. Great dark turtles with shells over a foot wide mysteriously appear and as mysteriously go away unless they are captured for the pot by a "grass" man, and green and yellow-striped garter snakes swim downstream with a jerking wiggle, their heads held high above water as proudly as a swan's.

The never-drying stream, fed by its secret springs, sometimes rises fiercely after a storm and pretends its roaring muddy waters will swallow the foundations of the gray, pointed house, but this is in good nature, although it may leave in its new path a great log, or a hunk of cinder block, or a square column of bricks that the children have patiently dug from the bridge, to show what it could do if it were of a mind. Soon it goes back to the channel it prefers, murmuring as sweetly as a baby chicken whose mother is near.

The muddy water is full of life, and it enriches all life it touches, from the grass which grows wildly without fertilizer, to the watercress, sword-reeds and "railroad lilies."

Water spiders skate back and forth in diagonals after other insects, and small fish push up nests of rocks to cover their eggs. Once, before thoughtless hunters destroyed the last of the breeders, bullfrogs groaned in the night with the smaller frog choruses. Pale pink roses reach out thorny arms to strangle the path by Clint's Island that leads to the "jungle," where young balsams and Virginia bluebells and Christmas fern love to grow. But "Sarah's white rose," the root brought from England by the girl who was a Woods and married a Lapsley, cannot be found.

Occasionally children with cans and jars raid the banks for crawfish, and their small, frantic dogs dance in rounds, barking at the wealth of "game" in the trees. But these temporary invaders are viewed scornfully from above, with less

good nature than the old families of Lexington once looked with gentle but cool politeness at newcomers who had lived here only forty years or so. (For one may not be blamed for the misfortune of his place of birth.)

Red-spotted fireflies hide all day in the grass and the boxwoods, and only at dusk come out and begin to fly always upward, to the top of the trees, toward the moon, blinking their love messages at their chosen sweethearts.

And dusk is the time that the small, big-eyed screech owls flutter near the house to sit quietly on a low tree limb, turning their heads sharply each time to watch you as you move, until you wonder if they can screw their heads completely around.

(It is not until later in the night, when you are comfortably asleep, that they start the whickering quaver of their wailing.)

There was a time when the people thought they owned the place called "Sarah's Run," and tried to bend it to their will.

There were brave plans to stop the cutting floods by cleverly engineered stone banks, and to plant masses of bloom close to the creek, and to cause the "wicked" birds to go away and the "good" birds to stay, and to provide herbs and berries and vegetables and fruits that would grow in profusion without work after the first planting.

But the creek, and the birds, and even the vegetation resisted, not with fierceness, but lazily, almost with mockery.

The peach trees, and blight-resistant chestnuts, and strawberries, and asparagus, and rhubarb died, although asparagus and delicious wild strawberries scatter themselves everywhere, and an occasional wild peach tree comes up in almost every corner except where they were planted. The creek washed out the pretty wooden bridges and the rhododendrons, although it would allow a plank, chained to a tree, to stay.

The birds ate the grapes and the cherries before they were ripe. A single mole, by diligent overtime, day and night, drilled a close-knit maze impartially under every part of the tremendous lawn, beneath the rose beds, around or through the parrot tulips, resisting traps, moth balls, and a hose with lethal gas from the car. Small boys fell flat on their noses, and ladies learned to wear low-heeled shoes. He finally disappeared, probably dying of loneliness and old age.

Another fine plan was to cut the grass without labor, and

The Creek Named

SARAH

By ANNE BRANDON HEINER
Lexington

Commission photo by Kesteloo



for this a yellow-eyed lady goat named Lilith was purchased and staked on the hill on a long rope. But Lilith was not a grass eater. The bark of large or small trees, or any of the choicer shrubs were more to her liking. Aside from this, she was a pleasant little animal who would waggle her small beard in a friendly manner from side to side as she chewed her forbidden food (except for the time that the nephew called Wili, then all arms and legs, bent over the creek with his rear to her, and she could not resist the temptation).

Thus it went, and only Gee III's bank, with the three thumbprints and the two paw prints of the dogs in the cement between the rocks, and the two ancient apple trees planted long ago when the house was built, and shared equally by birds, animals, insects and humans, remain of the great design.

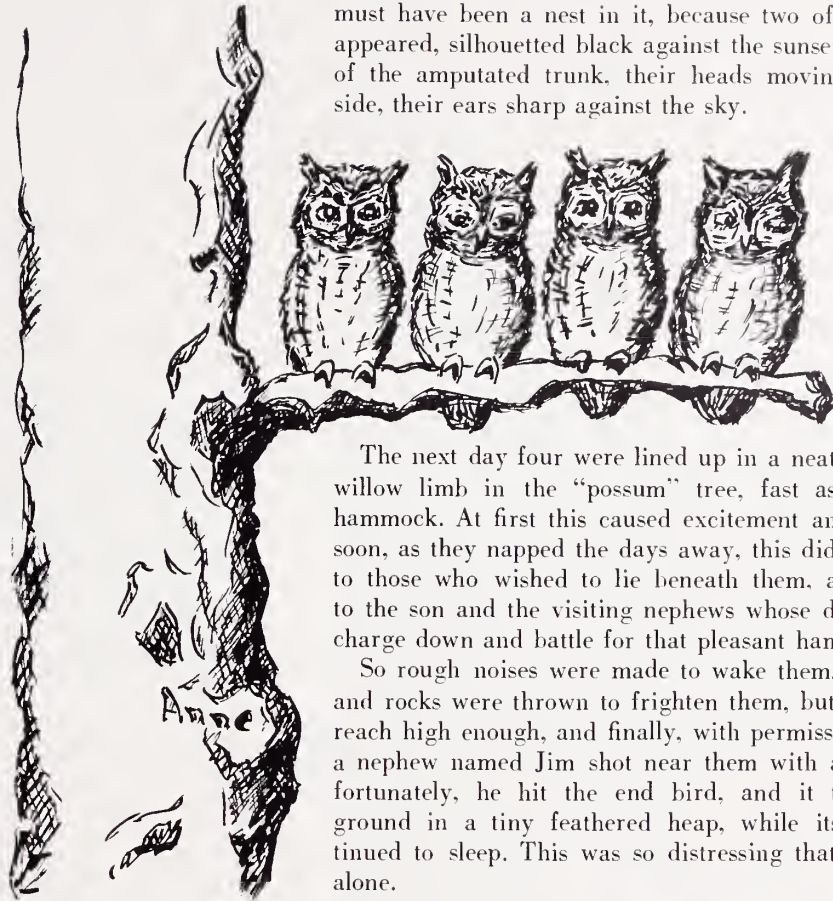
Sometimes, in late August, there are no apples on the trees, and then the next August the mottled, delicious-testing fruit will bend down the old limbs, and cover the ground with enough for all, plus gifts to school lunches, neighbors and friends far away.

Then, on drowsy, hot afternoons when the lettuce-green cicadas swell their drums in and out in their strident rising "E-E-E-E-E . . ." a cautious muskrat peeps above the water, barely showing his head and his thick neck, waiting. If there is no movement on the lawn, and all is quiet, he moves slowly up the hill to the apple trees, dragging his rat-tail in a perfect circle whose path shows in the thick grass, never putting his dainty front claw-feet on the same earth until he safely reaches his bank and his dirt slide, and disappears under the water in gay abandon.

When the people still thought they owned the place, they cut away the dead half of a double willow, and, when it came crashing down, a disheveled possum came with it, shook herself, fixed the vandals with a stern, beady eye, and

turned her back before she waddled deliberately away.

Four tiny baby screech owls lived at Sarah's Run the summer that the lankiest of the willows was topped. There must have been a nest in it, because two of them suddenly appeared, silhouetted black against the sunset on the flat top of the amputated trunk, their heads moving from side to side, their ears sharp against the sky.



The next day four were lined up in a neat row on a high willow limb in the "possum" tree, fast asleep above the hammock. At first this caused excitement and pleasure, but soon, as they napped the days away, this did not seem good to those who wished to lie beneath them, and particularly to the son and the visiting nephews whose delight it was to charge down and battle for that pleasant hammock.

So rough noises were made to wake them, but they slept, and rocks were thrown to frighten them, but they could not reach high enough, and finally, with permission of the man, a nephew named Jim shot near them with a B-B gun. Unfortunately, he hit the end bird, and it tumbled to the ground in a tiny feathered heap, while its brothers continued to sleep. This was so distressing that they were left alone.

But a few days later at dusk, the three were on the wing,



Commission photo by Kesteloo

and they suddenly flew down in formation and attacked the son, and drove him, with his arms above his head to protect his eyes, up the hill and into the house. This may not have been retaliation, but all the people were relieved when the babies disappeared and the hammock could go back to its old place.

Now, at Sarah's Run, there is a truce. The spiders and hornets do not sting unless you tear down their webs, or put a careless foot into their holes in the ground. The neighborhood cats are too plump to hunt except when their families desert them for the beach. The starlings and the purple grackles and jay birds tolerate the cardinals and brown thrashers and titmice if they stay out of the way. And even the creek named Sarah seems to have mellowed. She only hurls a great log in the rose bed once in a long while.

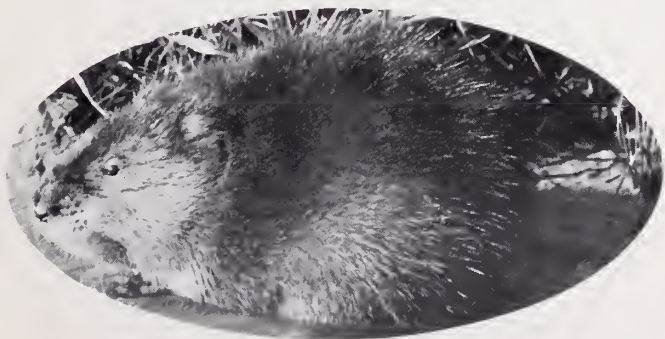


Photo by L. L. Rue III

A Broken Spirit Dries the Bones

By LEWIS BRANDT
Game Warden, Albemarle County

IT was a warm day in early fall, a Sunday afternoon in fact—the kind of day one likes to ride with his family through the still green countryside absorbing all, knowing that winter lurks just over the hill. Had it not been for poachers, I would have been with my family, too; but there I was lying in honeysuckle thicket waiting for those who can't wait for the legal hunting season.

Hours have a way of passing very slowly when one is waiting, and it isn't long before a search is made for some form of amusement. A pocket knife and whittling stick at a time like this perhaps goes farther than Matt Dillon. It was at this point I heard a few soft steps in the thicket behind me, and keeping as quiet and still as possible, I watched every opening in the entanglement of pine and vine. It was only a glimpse of the deceptively frail looking legs of an adult deer that told me who was tiptoeing by; however, my attention to this deer was quickly drawn away by the sound of more steps which were much closer. There have been only two occasions in my life in which I have been close, really close, to a big game animal not wounded or captive, and this was one of them. Poking his big velvet rack through the honeysuckle and looking me right in the face was a very beautiful buck. The temptation to have a little fun was too great, so I raised my arms and said "boo!" In what was less than an instant, the powerful hind legs of this deer stiffened, coiled, and sprang; in the twinkling of an eye he was sailing in long bounds across the field in front of me.

What a majestic, proud animal he was—his frame completely tuned with inborn instincts fitting him for the wild. Man will never know the feelings possessed by wild creatures, but when he came to a halt several hundred yards away and looked back at me, his erect frame seemed to say that his spirit knew of pride.

It is written of old in the Proverbs, "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine, but a broken spirit dries the bones." These words have comforted many ailing people over the years; however, the truth of the words is not peculiar to man alone—it is not his sole possession. Watching this proud buck slip away into the cover of the forest, having mastered the perils of his domain, I felt a sense of regret that there are people who would take this animal and other creatures of the wild and break that spirit which singles them out from all other creatures. Certainly when the spirit is broken that quality of life we should respect begins to wither, or as the Proverb says poetically, the bones begin to dry.

I am not speaking of the bullet or arrow breaking the spirit, but rather the cage. It is the separation of this animal from his natural haunts that does the job. When he is tamed, the deer, or any of the wild things that roam our

forests, loses that quality which brings him a certain majesty, and is reduced to a common household beggar. There is a certain thrill, I admit, in having a "wild" animal eat from one's hand; but this thrill generally gives way to regret when we realize that with taming we have destroyed the very things that made him wild—the natural instincts which are his most potent assets for survival. It has often been the case when one has captured a baby animal that the fun of raising him diminishes as the animal grows to maturity—he becomes too big. The fawn is cute hanging around the house, but when he reaches 150 pounds, it isn't long before the "head of the house" is complaining about the big lummo getting hair all over her rug and furniture. Thus, the deer is released, or the family summons the game warden to have the wild creature removed to his native habitat. However, the habitat is no longer native; he is thrust into an alien land with no protective instincts, and it will take a long time for him to regain even a portion of that spirit which makes him elusive to his predators, including man.

The question arises, "Why do we make captives of wild animals in the first place?" Perhaps we believe the answer lies in the word love . . . a word which describes the best and the worst emotions in man. Who could deny that the soft browns, shadowy blacks, and snowy whites perfectly blended in the coat of our wild friends smites us with a sense of beauty. And when these colors are reflected in large brown eyes, we have an animal that people young and old could love. However, I never believed in the virtue of a love that was destructive. How can we literally love something to death?

Since all love has an object, we must go another step in analyzing the love we have in making pets of the wild creature. Is the animal the real object of our love? Is it the furry creature that delights us, or could the object of our love possibly be self? To possess a fawn or squirrel or any other friend of the forest makes us different from the neighbors. When excited friends exclaim, "Where did you find him?" I have a feeling that the word "you" is capitalized in our mind rather than the word "him." We are thinking inside that while others have a dog or a cat I have a pet from the woods which I caught and I tamed. It may be in a small way we are reflecting the love that has ruined men and nations from the beginning of time . . . the love of self rather than the love of others.

The sport of hunting is a necessary venture which keeps the game animals in a sound balance with the land and its supply of food, but the taming of one is neither sound nor merciful. If you are tempted to snatch a resident of the forest and bring him into your world of ice cream and cookies, ponder for a moment the words of the ancient Proverb ". . . a broken spirit dries the bones."

VIRGINIA WILDLIFE

CONSERVATIONGRAM

Commission Activities and Late Wildlife News . . . At A Glance

EASTERN DEER KILL TOTALS 13,265. Virginia's deer kill east of the Blue Ridge totalled 133,265 animals for the 1966-67 season, a little below the 15,390 taken in this section last year. A slight cutback on either-sex shooting in the eastern section last fall was expected to result in a somewhat lower harvest. Combined with the western kill of 12,846, this made a total of 26,111 deer bagged in the state last season.

Southampton County again led the eastern section in kill with 1,209 animals. Sussex County ranked second with 735, followed by Surry County where 593 were bagged. All three of the leading counties were down about 20 percent from last year's harvest.

Most eastern counties with bucks-only seasons make slight gains over the previous season. Buckingham County managed to struggle into fourth place among eastern counties with a kill of 530 animals in spite of the bucks-only limitation. In Northern Neck counties where either-sex shooting was cut from the full season to 5 days, kills dropped from 30 to 50 percent.

Through the controlled harvest of antlerless deer, Virginia deer herds have been brought to carrying capacity status in western Virginia and in most parts of eastern Virginia. The Commission hopes, with the judicious application of either-sex shooting days, to keep the harvest on a rather even keel and prevent great fluctuation. The kill could probably be increased if some of our other losses, particularly those caused by free ranging dogs, could be reduced.

TURKEY KILL HITS HIGH MARK. A total of 4,026 turkey tags received to date makes the 1966 Virginia fall turkey kill the best since 1960 and the second highest ever recorded. The good kill was a combination of several factors including the recent restricted seasons in eastern Virginia, the early eastern opening in 1966, and a good hatch over most of the state.

Most Virginia counties shared in the increased kill. Bath County maintained top spot although it dropped slightly from last year's all-time record of 511 to 454 in 1966. Nearly all eastern counties recorded higher kills due in part to the early season which began with the opening of the eastern deer season when large numbers of hunters were afield.

SPRING GOBBLER SEASON SET FOR LARGER AREA. A 13 day spring gobbler season for the largest block of Virginia counties ever opened to this type of hunting was officially approved by the Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries. A total of 74 counties and cities were included on the open list for the April 29-May 13 season.

Hunters will be limited to shooting hours beginning at ½ hour before sunrise and ending at 10 a.m. EST each day. When the state switches to daylight saving time, the day following opening day, hunters who remembered to set their watches ahead one hour will have until 11:00 a.m. to get out of the woods.

Counties and cities included on the open list are as follows: Albemarle, Alleghany, Amelia, Amherst, Appomattox, Augusta, Bath, Bedford, Bland, Botetourt, Brunswick, Campbell, Caroline, Carroll, Charles City, Charlotte, Chesterfield, Clarke, Craig, Culpeper, Cumberland, Dinwiddie, Essex, Fairfax, Fauquier, Floyd, Franklin, Frederick, Giles, Grayson, Greene, Greensville, Hampton (City), Hanover, Henrico, Henry, Highland, Isle of Wight, King George, King William, Loudoun, Lunenburg, Madison, Mecklenburg, Montgomery, Nansemond, Nelson, New Kent, Newport News (City), Nottoway, Orange, Page, Patrick, Pittsylvania, Powhatan, Prince George, Prince William, Pulaski, Rappahannock, Roanoke, Rockbridge, Rockingham, Shenandoah, Southampton, Spotsylvania, Stafford, Surry, Sussex, Warren, Wythe, York, and those portions of Smyth, Tazewell, and Washington counties lying outside the bounds of Clinch Mountain and Hidden Valley Wildlife Management areas. Counties listed include National and State Forests, where applicable.

THE Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries' Fish Division, flushed over success of its initial pay-as-you-go trout fishing project on a Southwest Virginia creek, has turned to a lake for its second one.

The place is Douthat Lake at Douthat State Park near Clifton Forge. Last June, Fish Division personnel began stocking 200 rainbow trout a week in the lake. The weekly allocation was stepped up to 400 in mid-August, and this rate continued to the end of the park season.

This was all part of an experiment to determine if Douthat could be developed into pay-as-you-go trout waters.

About 20 percent of the stocked trout bore red plastic tags tied to their dorsal fins with nylon string. The Fish Division, in order to obtain information on the catches, paid \$1 for each tag returned.

From the data obtained from the return of these tags the Fish Division was able to determine the number of trout that had to be maintained in the lake to provide a satisfactory level of fisherman success, and was also able to prove that an adequate recovery rate of the stocked fish could be expected to make pay-as-you-go management a financially sound venture. It was also noted that while some of the marked trout turned up in someone's creel soon after they were released, some of them released in June, at the very first, managed to escape fishermen until August.

Based upon these results of last year's experiment, the Commission was ready to make Douthat the state's second daily fee trout fishing facility. The only other one is on Big Tumbling Creek in the Clinch Mountain Wildlife Management Area in Smyth and Washington Counties. Under the rules, fishermen pay \$1 a day to try their luck and can keep five trout. They must have fishing licenses, although *no trout license* is required.

Last summer—and into the fall—anglers were in the high clover at the lake. No daily fee was charged them. All that

All summer long trout will be brought from the hatchery at Williams-ville and released at the upper end of the lake. Fishing near the release point has proved to be poor, as the fish head immediately for deep water.



A. F. Bryant of Selma, with two rainbows he caught at Douthat. Last year's exper- even" r

It's pay - as - you AT DOUTHAT STATE PARK L

was needed was either a state fishing license, a county license (if the fisherman was a resident of Bath County where Douthat is located), or a \$1.50 license good for three consecutive days. And quite a number of fishermen caught trout with tags worth a buck, too. That's a combination hard to beat—catching trout and getting paid for it!

The \$1.50 so-called "trip licenses" were sold at the park restaurant, and there was a jump in sales once word got out about the trout program. These three-day licenses were especially attractive to out-of-state visitors to the park, who would have been charged considerably more had they been forced to buy the full-year non-resident licenses.

Rowboats can be rented from the park concessionaire at the dock, which is near the restaurant. During the summer, boats are a must to catch the trout. They stay down deep in the colder water near the middle of the lake.

No gasoline-operated motors are permitted on the lake (a state park regulation); therefore, fishermen have to depend on oars to take them to and fro. Electric motors, however, are allowed.

The trout released in the lake are hauled from the state hatchery at Williamsville, less than an hour's drive away.



established the density of stocked fish required to insure good fishing and a "break every rate."

ou - go for trout

KE

By OZZIE WORLEY
Roanoke

This eliminates a need for "holding ponds" for the fish, such as must be used at Big Tumbling Creek.

When the truck calls at Douthat, which is off U. S. Highway 60 just north of Clifton Forge, the driver pulls to the edge of the water near the beach at the upper end of the lake. A helper dips the fish from the truck with a net and walks with them the short distance to the water.

There is a channel near where they are freed, and the trout soon disperse in it and find their way to deep pockets where the water is to their liking. The fish are from nine to twelve inches long.

At the outset of the experiment, they were placed in buckets and taken by boat to the middle of the lake for release. But this was found unnecessary. Few of them have been lost from the shoreline stocking now followed.

Although 200 rainbows a week were stocked initially last year, the allocation was doubled the week of August 21. Naturally, when the trout were stocked a knot of park guests congregated around the site. Some of them began fishing for the newly freed trout, but they had little, if any, success. The fish quickly headed out for the deeper water.

Boats are not allowed on the lake at night (another park regulation). Since nighttime is when the trout hit best during the hot summer months, fishermen going out early in the morning had the most success.

During the experimentation period the daily limit of five trout was in effect, just as at Philpott Reservoir and the other lakes stocked with these fish—and just as it is on Big Tumbling Creek and as it is at Douthat this year under the pay-as-you-go plan.

Fishermen like Fred Bryant, who lives at Selma not far from Douthat, have found that worms and canned corn kernels, dropped about fifteen feet down, have produced the best results. The most consistent catches last summer were made near the overflow pipe, in the deepest part of the lake close to the dam.

Why was Douthat selected for this experiment? There are several good reasons, among them:

(1) The Fish Division's desire to establish a second pay-as-you-go operation, (2) the nearness of the Williamsville hatchery, and (3) the division's discouragement over the failure of bass to grow as rapidly in the lake as they would like.

When it was drained some years ago, a disappointing number of big bass were found. There were large numbers of stunted bluegills.

Based on these findings, there is little reason to expect that the trout will attain the superior growth of those placed in Philpott or Carvins Cove—if they grow much at all. But they will be stocked on the same principle used at Big Tumbling; that is, a number equal to that caught daily.

Fish Division Chief Jack Hoffman has expressed pleasure over the Douthat program in its experimental stages, and he gives a strong indication that he expects this enterprise to be just as successful and popular with the fishermen as the first pay-as-you-go venture on Big Tumbling Creek has been.

Fishermen in boats have the best luck, in deep water near the dam.



Aid Is Available For WILDLIFE CONSERVATION

By HAL W. MYERS, JR.
District Game Biologist

THE landowner who would like to increase the wildlife populations on his private holdings will find that he is offered a lot more help and encouragement to do just that than ever before. This help takes various forms, from free technical advice and planting materials, to reimbursement of costs of instituting conservation practices and cash payments for acreage diverted from cropland to such uses as wildlife habitat and outdoor recreation.

In spite of the acquisition and development of substantial acreages of public hunting lands in recent years, over eighty percent of the wildlife in Virginia still is to be found on privately owned lands. A special emphasis needs to be placed upon this valuable resource if, from the western mountains to the coast, sportsmen are to continue to have access to a variety of hunting opportunities that rate among the best. This fact was recognized by the Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries back in 1948, when the Farm Game Restoration and Development Project was initiated to assist landowners in the management of wildlife resources.

Over the years, various federal and state agencies have cooperated with landowners and sportsmen in providing for wildlife needs. Thousands of acres have been developed for food and cover through the planting of recommended seeds and plants. Many species of wildlife have been managed, ranging from the six-ounce quail to the eight-hundred-pound elk. Educational materials have been made available in the form of lectures, articles, pamphlets and films. Numerous individuals, clubs, and organizations have been outstanding in wildlife conservation practices. These factors, plus numerous others, account for our wildlife as we have it today. Still, we must expand and intensify these efforts if we are to continue to enjoy the good hunting and fishing to which we have become accustomed. We are faced with increased populations, urban expansion, four-lane highways, industrial growth, modern farming, and other changes in land use. Quail hunting, in particular, has undergone a drastic change in recent years. That favorite hunting area which was good for eight or ten coveys (and it seems like only yesterday) is now in a subdivision, or is a biological desert of hay stubble pasture, or a pine plantation.

Cost-sharing programs are available to help landowners improve wildlife habitat.

Commission photo by Kesteloo

To be assured a good fall crop of wildlife, planning and management are required, as is necessary for any agricultural crop. As an aid in this phase of conservation, landowner assistance is available through established programs in every county of the state.

Under the Farm Game Program, the Virginia Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries makes available wildlife planting material for the establishment of food and cover. This material consists of annual game bird mixture, sericea lespedeza, and bicolor lespedeza seeds. There is no charge involved, but the amount of seed allocated to any one co-operator is limited. In most counties this material is available through the local game warden, Soil Conservation Service, Agricultural Extension Service, or the Vocational Agricultural Departments. District Game Biologists are available to assist with planning of farms and supplying technical advice. In 1966 a total of 84,163 pounds of seed was distributed to 11,898 cooperators.

Under the Department of Agriculture, the Agricultural Conservation Program (A.C.P.) is an available program to promote the conservation of soil, water, and related wildlife on privately owned lands. There are numerous conservation



Wildlife planting materials are available free from the Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries.

practices approved under the program in which the Federal Government will share with Virginia farmers the cost of carrying out a practice. Presently there are approved wildlife conservation practices under the program referred to as G-1, G-2, and G-3.

The G-1 practice is for the establishment of vegetative cover for wildlife food and habitat. An entire farm or a portion can be entered under this practice. Each planted area must be $\frac{1}{4}$ acre or larger with a minimum planting per farm being one-half acre. The following operations are available under the practice: (1) applying needed lime, (2) applying commercial fertilizer, (3) seeding of approved seeds and mixtures, (4) planting approved plants and shrubs, and (5) establishing fences to protect the planted areas. All areas on which cost-sharing is obtained must be maintained and protected from fire and grazing.

The G-2 practice pertains to the constructing of impoundments for controlling water level for management beneficial to wildlife. This practice is for the development of shallow water areas to improve habitat for waterfowl, fur-bearing animals and other wildlife. The G-3 practice is for the construction or scaling of dams or ponds for wildlife



consisting of more depth than impoundments under G-2.

Full information as to approved practices, specifications, and cost-sharing rates may be obtained in Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service county offices.

The Soil Bank Program, made available from 1957 through 1959, converted many valuable acres for wildlife, since this acreage was retired for five or ten years. A current program made available under the Food and Agricultural Act of 1965 is the Cropland Adjustment Program. This program is often referred to as C.A.P. Now in the second year of progress, the program was initiated to control two growing problems in our country—farm crop surplus and the shortage of public recreational lands. All croplands diverted under the program are put into protective conservation use. The result is more lands for recreational use, better wildlife habitat, reduced stream siltation and a more beautiful countryside.

Farmers under the program may enter into an agreement to divert cropland normally used for tobacco, peanuts, cotton, feed grains, and tame hay. This acreage may be taken out of production for a period of five to ten years, and the annual payment rate varies according to the crop consigned to the program. Since all diverted acreages are put to conservation uses, landowners are also eligible for conservation cost-sharing in establishing an approved cover crop. This is in addition to the adjusted annual payment related to the type of crop set aside.

Should any of the lands taken out of production have resources to offer for public hunting, fishing, trapping, or



Extra annual payments may be made to landowners who develop the wildlife and public outdoor recreation potential of their property.

hiking, an extra annual payment is available for permitting public use. This aspect of the program so far has not offered much in the way of public recreation in this region. Virginia farms averaged 134.8 acres in size according to the 1959 agricultural census. The size of acreage and other factors limit public access in many cases, but our wildlife will probably benefit from habitat provided on each diverted acre.

These programs and similar ones which will probably be conceived in the future are essential in the wildlife conservation field. Landowners, sportsmen and personnel of land-use agencies must continue their excellent cooperation in order to insure good hunting and fishing in the future.

THE MAKING OF GAME CROPS

SPRING is in full flower and all over the country wild things are replenishing their kind. Squirrels and cottontails already have a first installment on the year's capital stock. Some bushytails will produce a second brood, and cottontails will have several more litters before the end of summer. Grouse and quail will be herding broods of chicks most any day now. And those that fail in the first attempt will try again—and again, and again.

"This effort of wild things to perpetuate their kind is a study in determination," says Clark Webster, manager of wildlife management for Remington Arms Company. "And all considered, it's a bit of a miracle that we're not up to our armpits in animals of all types. But while nature is lavish on the production line, she's also highly indifferent to the well-being of her charges.

"For example, take quail—or ducks. You'd think a 50% loss of nests would be nothing short of a catastrophe. Yet the fact is that such a loss is common among most game birds and, now and again, nest destruction may run as high as 75%.

"The causes vary from time to time and place to place. Mostly it's a combination of things such as spring mowing, a host of predators and the weather. But whatever the causes, the fact is that more nests fail than succeed. That's where persistence pays off.

"All of our game birds will and do reneest. And their efforts continue until either they are rewarded with a hatch or are closed out by the lateness of the season. That's why it is a common occurrence to see a new brood of September quail, or half-grown birds in hunting season.

"Don't credit the mama bird with having raised two broods. It doesn't happen. The most and least you can say

is that she gave it the college try and finally brought off a brood.

"This determination to produce a crop through repeated nesting efforts might suggest that fall populations should be about the same each year. But here's the joker. Renesting involves progressively smaller clutches. So even though most of the breeders may eventually bring off a brood, the end result is not the same as when good conditions permit a high rate of success on the initial try. And, of course, whenever adverse conditions force renesting, there's the possibility that not all the nesters will be successful even after repeated efforts.

"In the interest of building bigger game crops, it's reassuring to know that Nature, fertile and persevering, is on the side of numbers. And where conditions can be changed for the betterment of a species, the potential for rapid increase is always present.

"Some things, obviously, are out of reach. The weather, for example, can't be dealt with directly. But suitable nesting cover developed on high ground may help to relieve the need for nesting on low areas susceptible to flooding. Mowing of hayfields usually involves an unfortunate but mostly unavoidable loss of nesting game. But the burning or mowing of fence rows and roadsides is neither necessary nor good farming economy. And the preservation of such cover would relegate hayfield nesting to choice rather than necessity.

"To a considerable extent, the key to bumper game crop is largely a matter of removing road blocks and breaking bottlenecks. More than being just prolific, wildlife of all types has an explosive capacity for increase. And modern-day game management aims for readjustments of the landscape to permit a greater realization of this built-in potential."

WELCOME, BIRDERS!

By MRS. JACQUELYN SHOPLAND
Richmond

WHEN the Virginia Society of Ornithology (VSO) holds its annual meeting in Richmond on April 28-29, the center of activities will be Virginia Inn on Chamberlayne Road (U.S. 301). Host for the convocation of birders, amateur and professional, will be Richmond Natural History Society, its chapter affiliate. Each year the VSO holds its annual meeting in a different locality in the state, affording one of its chapters the pleasure of extending its hospitality and particular local attractions in birding to the state organization.

Planning and looking forward to this action-filled weekend has been a year-long project of Richmond Natural History Society, under the expert guidance and enthusiasm of Mrs. Warren M. Smith, its president. All of its approximately 60 members have worked together with zeal to make this a successful and long-to-be-remembered get-together, from the Friday meeting and evening program straight through to the conclusion of the Saturday field trips.

After having conducted its business portion of the meet-

under the supervision of the National Audubon Society, which lays out the strict rules and procedures. This in itself is an invaluable aid in the search for more statistics on birds.

No less important is the banding of birds, which is authorized by and under the supervision of the Fish and Wildlife Service of the U. S. Department of the Interior. Permits have been issued to about 20 VSO members, who are licensed to trap birds in nets and wire cages for banding and releasing. A metal band, locked onto the leg of a bird, reveals evidence of the bird's travels and habits when it is identified by its number which has been recorded by the bander and reported to the Fish and Wildlife Service. Mr. and Mrs. Sydney Mitchell of Newport News, who are active in bird-banding at their five-acre home, have banded 16,000 birds since 1961, including 128 species. In addition to doing this important work, the Mitchells photograph the birds after banding them, and show the slides to garden clubs and bird clubs. They have shown them to some 7,000 school children since they began this work.

Other phases of the organization's purposes and goals, such as the study of the decrease of the bald eagle, are constantly and carefully carried out by such people as: Charles W. Hacker of Hampton, its president; Frederic R. Scott, Richmond businessman, who holds a master's degree in biology;



Bird banding is among the important bird study activities in which VSO members participate. Left: Sydney Mitchell of Newport News bands a mockingbird. Right: Mrs. Mitchell carefully records the banding of a white-throated sparrow before releasing the bird.

Photos courtesy Newport News Daily Press



ing, the group will enjoy the annual dinner on Friday evening, followed by a program featuring a speaker of national reputation.

Beginning very early on Saturday, a variety of field trips will be offered, one in the Jamestown-Yorktown area.

One important activity throughout the weekend will be members' sharing and comparing their experiences in birding since their last encounter.

Now numbering among its members many prominent ornithologists and biologists, the VSO was founded in 1930 with 42 charter members, of whom about 11 are still active in the organization. The membership has grown to approximately 500 today, with perhaps a dozen local bird clubs carrying on its important scientific work throughout the state. Virginia offers marvelous opportunities for significant contributions to bird study, with its territory stretching from saltwater beaches and marshes to peaks more than a mile high. Knowledge of the life and habits of birds is gained through untiring efforts of trained observers in such activities as the Christmas bird count, when groups all over the state take a yearly census, bird-by-bird, so to speak, of every locality. All this information is related and reported to the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The whole effort is

Dr. J. J. Murray of Lexington, retired Presbyterian minister and ornithologist, VSO charter member, and author of *Virginia Wildlife's* Bird of the Month series; Dr. Alexander C. Wetmore, former secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, and one of the world's foremost ornithologists; Mrs. James W. Wiltshire of Lynchburg, a charter member, retired as professor of biology for 35 years at Randolph-Macon Woman's College; Dr. Ruskin S. Freer, first president of the VSO, retired as head of the biology department of Lynchburg College.

Individual clubs have their own special projects such as restoration of the bluebird through distribution of scientifically designed bluebird boxes, a special undertaking of the Lynchburg Bird Club. Richmond Natural History Society has, as its project, sponsored a "campership" for several summers at Virginia Federation of Garden Clubs' Nature Camp at Vesuvius, Virginia, in order to encourage an active interest in conservation among the youth of its members.

All VSO members, young or old, professional or avid amateur, are seriously dedicated to the pursuit of their pleasure in birding, which never becomes boring or predictable, always keeps them alert, absorbed, and full of the wonderful anticipation of the beauties and excitement of nature.

Trout

By ALBERT G. SHIMMEL
West Decatur, Pennsylvania

TROUT . . . What magic in a single word? It speaks of mountain brooks, cool from the rocky springs that gave them birth, and of the rivers small and great, white water and still pools, shaded by hemlocks where deer come down to drink. The mystery of deep water, gouged by the freshets, spreading gravel beds where caddisworms spin fishing nets or trundle their cases across the heaped debris. It speaks of sanctuaries where a man may find the quietness he needs to clear his mind and fill his soul with strength, drawn from enduring hills.

He goes adventuring with fairy rod and dainty flies, to seek for what—a Rainbow trout?—a ballet dancer decked in tights of salmon, green and blue, silver flecked and sprinkled with black beauty marks, twirling above white water rips and leaping waterfalls in sheer exuberance.

A Brown? He the sophisticate in somber tweeds, an English Squire no less. Deliberate . . . his wits sharpened by long association with man. He rises leisurely, examines critically each fly before he takes. A fish to test the angler craftsman's skill.

The Brook . . . now there's a fish! His very name *Salvelinus fontinalis* . . . diminutive salmon of the flowing springs. What other fish can so delight the eye? Vermiculated markings clothe his back, matching the sinuous light that trembles to the water's dapplings. The colors on his side are borrowed from Aurora's veil, fluttering before the constellation of the bear. What other fish can conjure up the fragrance of crushed mint, the pungency of browse, the sight of Lady Birches clad in white . . . or, best of all, the campfire's smoke, that found its way into our hearts so long ago and made an incense for our evening prayer.

Was it so long ago my father pitched a tent, under the hemlocks that grew beside a mountain creek, and with his growing sons searched for the willing trout that lurked below the roaring waterfall and in the quiet pools? How eagerly they rose to meet the cast of flies, that swung and dipped over the glides. Those flies—a somber Gnat, a Greenwell's Glory and a Royal Coachman were the total sum and parcel of their unassuming art.

When evening came with veery's silver notes and wailing whip-poor-will to usher in the night, the firelight shone on faces bright with adventure but filled with calm content. Sitting beside the flames they watched the shadows rise and fall to spin for each a web of quiet dreams.

The fires of yesterday are dead; not even blackened ashes mark the spot. Tonight another fire burns bright, its smoke curls in slow spirals to the hemlock spires. The trout were excellent, spiced with woodsmoke and piquant watercress. We gaze into the fire—this son of mine grown tall and now his son. We feel the mystery as fathers of our race since time began. The trout . . . the night . . . the fire . . . We are a string of beads that links the present with the past and tugs at each toward the high adventure that shall be eternity



LEGEND:

*—National Forest Waters Species Stocked:
R.—River B.—Brook Trout
C.—Creek R.—Rainbow Trout
Br.—Branch BR.—Brown Trout
Fk.—Fork
L.—Lake

ALBEMARLE CO.

Moormans R., N. & S. Fk.

ALLEGHANY CO.

Jackson R., Gathright Area
Potts C.
Simpson C.*
Smith C.*
Pounding Mill Run*

May	June
R	
R, BR	R, BR
R	
R	
R	

1967 IN-SEASON TROUT STOCKING PLAN

AMHERST CO.

S. Fk. Piney R. & Piney R. Proper
Pedlar R., upper
Pedlar R., lower
North Fk. Buffalo R.
Brown Mt. Run*
Davis Mill C.*
Enchanted C.*
Little Irish C.*
Pedlar R.*
S. Fk. Piney R.*
Statons C.*

May	June
B, R, BR	B, R, BR
B, R	B, R
B, R	B, R
B, R	B, R
B, R	
B, R	
B, R	
R	R
R	

(Continued on Page 20)

In-season Trout Restocking Plan

(Continued from Page 19)

	May	June
AUGUSTA CO.		
St. Mary's R.	R, BR	R, BR
Back C.*	R	
Lower Sherando L.*	R	
North R.*	R	
Buffalo Br.*	R	
E. Dry Br.*	R	
Jerkentight C.*	R	
Ramsey Draft*	R	
Heartstone L.*	R	R
Elkhorn L.*	R	R
BATH CO.		
Bullpasture R.	R, BR	R, BR
Jackson R.	R, BR	R, BR
Back C.	R	
Back C. Gorge*	R	R
L. Prong Wilson C.*	R	
Mares Run*	R	
S. Fk. Pads C.*	R	
Muddy Run*	R	
BEDFORD CO.		
Hunting C.*	R	R
Battery C.*	R	
BLAND CO.		
Wolf C.	R, BR	R
Lick C.	B, R	R
No Business C.	B, R	
Laurel Fk.	B, R	R
Lick C.*	R	R
BOTETOURT CO.		
Jennings C.	R	R, BR
Mill C.	R	R
Roaring Run	R	B, R
North C.*	R	R
Middle C.*	R	R
McFalls C.*	R	R
Cornelius C.*	R	R
BUCHANAN CO.		
Slate C.	B, R	
Hurricane Fk.	B, R	
CARROLL CO.		
Big Reed Island C.	R	R
Little Reed Is. C.	R, BR	R
Crooked C.	R, BR	R
Stuarts C.	R	
Burkes Fk. C.	R	R
Coal C.	R	R
CRAIG CO.		
Johns C.	R, BR	
Potts C.	R, BR	R, BR
Sinking C.	R, BR	R
Barbours C.*	R	R
N. Fk. Barbours C.*	R	
S. Fk. Barbours C.*	R	
DICKENSON CO.		
Caney C.	R	
Frying Pan C.	B, R	
FLOYD CO.		
Beaver C.	B	
Burks Fk. C.	R	R
Howells C.	B, R	R
Indian C.	R	R
Meadow C.	B	
Rush Fk.	B	
West Fk., Little R.	R	R
Laurel Fk.	R	R
FRANKLIN CO.		
Green C.	B, R	
Maggodee C.	B, R	
Runnett Bag C.	B, R	
Blackwater R.	B, R	
FREDERICK CO.		
Back C.	B, R, BR	
Cedar C.	R, BR	R, BR
Hogue C.	R, BR	
Paddy Run*	R	

LEGEND:

*—National Forest Waters Species Stocked:
 R.—River B—Brook Trout
 C.—Creek R—Rainbow Trout
 Br.—Branch BR—Brown Trout
 Fk.—Fork
 L.—Lake

	May	June
GILES CO.		
Big Stony C.	R, BR	R
Dismal C.*	R	R
GRAYSON CO.		
Big Wilson C.	R	R
Middle Fk. Helton C.	B	B
Helton C.	B	R
Big Fox C.	R, BR	R
Middle Fox C.	R	R
Elk C.	R	R
Peach Bottom C.	B	R
Turkey Knob Fk. C.	B	
GREENE CO.		
Ivy Br.	B, R	
South R.	B, R	B, R
Swift Run	B, R	B, R
HENRY CO.		
Smith R.	R, BR	R, BR
HIGHLAND CO.		
Bullpasture R.	R, BR	R, BR
Crab Run	B, R	
Laurel Fk.	B, R	
South Fk. Potomac R.	B, R	
Jackson R.	R, BR	
Laurel Run*	R	
Benson Run*	R	
LEE CO.		
Hardy's C.	B, R	R
Martins C.	B, R	
MADISON CO.		
Garth Run	B, R	
Hughes R.	B, R	R
Robinson R.	B, R	
Rose R.	B, R	
MONTGOMERY CO.		
Brush C.	R	
Tom's C.	R	
S. Fk. Roanoke R. and Bottom C.	R	R
Poverty C.*	R	
Craig C.	R	
NELSON CO.		
Tye R.	R, BR	R, BR
N. Fk. Tye R.	R, BR	R, BR
Stony C.	B, R	B, R
Rockfish R.	B, R	
PAGE CO.		
E. Fk. Hawksbill C.	R	
Hawksbill C.	B, R, BR	
Cub Run*	R	
Pitt Spring Run*	R	
PATRICK CO.		
Dan R.	B, R, BR	R
Rock Castle C.	B, R	
Round Meadow C.	B, R	
N. Fk. Mayo C.	B, R	
S. Fk. Mayo C.	B, R	
Big Ivy Creek	B, R	
PULASKI CO.		
Big Laurel C.	B, R	
W. Fk. Peak C.	B	
RAPPAHANNOCK CO.		
Piney Br.	B, R	
Rush R.	B, R	R
Thornton R., N. Fk.	B, R	
ROANOKE CO.		
Roanoke R.	R, BR	

	May	June
ROCKBRIDGE CO.		
Mill C.	B,R	
South R.	R,BR	R,BR
Hayes C.	R,BR	
Irish C.	R	R
Elk C.*	R	
Big Marys C.*	R	
ROCKINGHAM CO.		
N. Fk. Shenandoah R.	R,BR	
Briery Br.	R	
Dry R.	R	
Silver Lake (Dayton)	R	R
Boones Run*	R	
Blacks Run*	B,R	
Gum Run*	B	
Hone Quarry*	B,R	
Skidmore*	B,R	
Union Springs*	B,R	
RUSSELL CO.		
Big Cedar Creek	R,BR	R
SCOTT CO.		
Big Stony	R	
Little Stony C.	B	
Stock C.	B	R
Cove C.	B,R	
Devil's Fork*	R	
Stony C.*	R	R
Straight Fk.*	R	R
Little Stony C.*	R	R
Cove C.*	R	R
SHENANDOAH CO.		
Passage C. (lower)	B,R	R
Big Stony C. (incl. Lower Laurel Run)	B,R	B,R
Cedar C.	B,R,BR	B,R
Mill C.	B,R,BR	
Little Stony (above Woodstock Res.)*	R	
Little Stony (below)*	R	
Mountain Run*	R	
Upper Passage C.	B	
Peters Mill C.	B	
SMYTH CO.		
S. Fk. Holston R.	R	R
Lick C.	B,R	R
Big Laurel	R	R
Staley's C.	B,R	R
Cregger C.*	R	
Comers C.*	R	R
Hurricane C.*	R	
Cressy C.*	R	
Houndshell C.*	R	
Dickey Br.*	R	
Rowland's C.*	R	
Canady C.*	R	
Little Laurel C.*	R	
TAZEWELL CO.		
Cove C.	B,R	R
Laurel C.	B,R	
Roaring Fk. C.	B,R	R
Little Tumbling C.	B,R	R
Wolf C.	BR	R
Punch & Judy C.*	R	
WARREN CO.		
Gooney Run	R,BR	
WASHINGTON CO.		
White Top Laurel C.	R,BR	R
Tennessee Laurel C.	R	R
Green Cove C.	B,R	R
Big Brumley C.	B	R
Big Tumbling C.	B,R	R
Straight Br.*	R	R
WISE CO.		
S. Fk. Powell R.	B,R	
N. Fk. Pound R.	R	
Burns C.*	R	
Clear C.*	R	R
WYTHE CO.		
Cripple C.	R,BR	R
Francis Mill C.*	R	
E. Fk. Stony C.*	R	
Dry Run,* E. and W. Fks.	R	
W. Fk. Reed C.*	R	
W. Fk. Peak C.	R	

Right Place, Right Time for Fish

(Continued from Page 5)

acre flood control and power development in Patrick, Franklin and Henry Counties were best prior to July and the third week of September; catfish and bream yields fair most of the season. June and July sucker and carp catches were fair.

Excellent trout catches were reported from the DAN and SMITH RIVERS in mid-May (following closure for stocking) and mid-August. Good to fair fishing other weeks lasted through early September.

Best FAIRYSTONE STATE PARK LAKE fishing was for suckers and crappie in late April and early May, and for largemouth bass the first week of June. Late April and early May crappie creels from MARTINSVILLE RESERVOIR were also good. Both lakes boasted good sunfish yields the last week of May, first and last weeks of June. Fairystone fishing was interrupted the last three weeks in September when the lake was drained for mud removal.

The Appalachian Power Company's 20,000 acre SMITH MOUNTAIN LAKE in Pittsylvania County yielded outstanding largemouth and crappie creels for a month beginning in mid-April, good fishing most of the rest of the season. Smallmouth catches were alternately good and fair; sunfish and catfish yields consistently fair; May carp catches good. Rainbow trout stocked in December 1965 had reached 14 to 15 inches by August, and catches were rated fair.

LEESVILLE RESERVOIR fishing was good for largemouth bass from the third week of April through June. Fair smallmouth catches were recorded during May and the last half of June. Crappie fishing, good in April and May, dropped to fair for the rest of the season. Fair sunfish and catfish creels were reported each week. Other Leesville Lake fishing rated only fair were late April through June wall-eyed pike catches and late May-early June carp creels.

Never reported good, 1966 PIGG RIVER fishing did produce fair largemouth, crappie and walleye creels in May. Fair also were April-August sunfish angling and April-September catfish strings. Smallmouth creels remained poor.

Fair STAUNTON RIVER largemouth bass fishing lasted from April through mid-July. Other Staunton angler results: May and June smallmouth fishing poor; crappie fair from May through mid-August, good in late August; bream fair through the summer; catfish, mostly fair, with a few scattered weeks of good angling. Striped bass fishing, fair in April, rose to excellent the second week of May. Declining gradually in July, the striper run was pretty well over by mid-August, when anglers took only occasional stragglers. Wall-eyed pike, carp, and rock bass fishing was fair through June.

KERR RESERVOIR'S largemouth and crappie fishing was fabulous when the fishing report began in mid-April; the boom lasted through the month. Bass averaged 2½ to 3 pounds, but some ran as high as 8-9 pounds. Shallow-running, underwater lures were angler favorites; casting to the mudbanks accounted for many late April catches. Crappie fishermen using minnows, small spinners and jigs often made catches of 100 fish from the upper lake. Two and one-half pound fish were common; some weighed better than three. May and June largemouth catches were good, and in June bass began hitting topwater baits more often. Crappie fishing, good the first half of May, was only fair in June. In September bass and crappie activity rose to good again, with crappie going to excellent the first week

of October. In April rockfish adults headed up the Roanoke and Dan Rivers to spawn. Striped bass catches, good from June (yielding many 18 pounders) through July (trollers taking large fish), fair in August, were rated poor in September and October. From June through October catfish catches were good.

GASTON RESERVOIR largemouth fishing was good the second week of May, second week of June, first half of July and first week of August. Both Kerr and Gaston bass fishing was good from the second week of September through mid-October. Gaston crappie fishing, fair previously, was good in September. Striped bass catches from the swift waters of Gaston's upper end were good the third week of July, last week of August (when individuals averaged 10 pounds) and second week of September. June, September and October catfish creels were good; May chain pickerel fishing, fair.

Pickerel and crappie fishing at CHICKAHOMINY LAKE was good the third week of April, fair late April through June, spotty thereafter. In September the tempo of crappie fishing picked up again slightly but was still only fair by mid-October. Best largemouth angling was reported in early May and mid-October. Good sunfish catches lasted through May and June. Early June was high point for catfish anglers.

Herring fishing at Walker's Dam on the CHICKAHOMINY was excellent through May, fishing pressure very heavy. The river yielded good white perch and catfish angling from mid-May through first week of June; good bream fishing in June; fair numbers of chain pickerel, crappie, and largemouth throughout the summer. Late April and early May brought fair striped bass success.

Season catches of catfish and perch were good in the LOWER JAMES RIVER; largemouth and sunfish creels mostly fair; striped bass fair the second weeks of May and October. Mid-April shad fishing below Richmond was good, and HERRING CREEK dipnetters had good luck the third week of May.

Fishing pressure was heavy at New Kent County's 1700-acre DIASCUND RESERVOIR when it opened to public fishing in June. For a couple of weeks largemouth fishing was excellent; chain pickerel, crappie and sunfish creels good; crappie fair. In July all fishing dropped to fair. Mid-September crappie fishing picked up and was good for a month.

UPPER JAMES RIVER smallmouth and sunfish anglers had consistently good catches the last two weeks of May through July; later catches fair, water low. Good catfish creels were taken during the last half of April through July, then, with the return of normal water levels, from mid-September through the reporting period. Good carp and sucker fishing ended the middle of June. Largemouth fishing was rated fair for most of the fishing season. Only the fourth week of May and the third week of June brought good strings of this species.

During the first week of May BACK BAY'S 25,000 acres of water—famous for largemouths—produced good catches of bass. From April through June, largemouth catches were generally fair; July through mid-September, poor. Mid-April, late July, and late August brought good white perch angling; crappie good from mid-April through early May. Catfish, sunfish and chain pickerel creels were fair through June; alternately fair and poor thereafter.

Clear water lakes Prince, Kilby, Meade, Cahoon and Smith—NORFOLK and SUFFOLK CITY WATER WORKS

RESERVOIRS—allowed good crappie and largemouth catches from April through mid-May. Anglers claimed excellent sunfish catches the fourth week of May, consistently good bream fishing most of the season. April, May, mid-July through August were good chain pickerel periods. From the middle of July through third week of September many weeks of good catfish yields were reported.

In the southeastern region of the state, good BLACK-WATER AND NOTTOWAY RIVER fishing for white perch and crappie came in April; for largemouth bass, in April and May with an occasional good week in August and September. Most weeks throughout the season were good for catfish and sunfish. April, late August, and mid-September through mid-October produced most of the good catches of chain pickerel. April herring dipnetters and casters using small spoons did well. Nottoway's April and May striped bass yields were fair. Both rivers had good white shad catches in late April; good carp yield mid-August and early September; walleye fishing fair beginning in mid-September.

Best MATTAPONI and PAMUNKEY hickory shad catches were made in April, but Aylett's anglers landed good numbers through the middle of May. Striped bass fishing, good the second and third weeks of April, continued fair through mid-August. Largemouth and pickerel catches were only fair throughout the season; sunfish fair with occasional good weeks; catfish best in June and early September. White perch anglers took fair catches from June through September. Late August and early September brought three good weeks.

Heaviest RAPPAHANNOCK RIVER hickory shad fishing was reported in late April—800 to 1000 anglers counted at Fredericksburg. Good catches of shad and white perch came in early May. VEPCO Powerhouse and Falmouth Bridge being very productive spots.

Above the fall line RAPPAHANNOCK fishing was good for sunfish, striped bass, and hickory shad the fourth week of May; good for smallmouths the first week of June. Pickerel, carp and rock bass catches were mostly fair throughout the season.

Below Fredericksburg in the RAPPAHANNOCK'S UPPER TIDAL PORTION, catfishing and largemouth catches were almost consistently good. June and early July, late August through mid-October brought carp success. April was crappie and herring month. Striped bass catches peaked the first week of June.

In the LOWER TIDAL RAPPAHANNOCK striped bass catches were fair most of the season, considered best the third week of July. Gray trout and spot catches ranked good in mid-August, September and early October.

PIANKATANK RIVER angling provided good white perch catches during the entire season; fair striped bass fishing after good catches around Piankatank Bridge the third week in April. Best gray trout and spot catches came the third week of July, with consistently fair catches thereafter through October.

DRAGON RUN anglers reported fair season-long striped bass and sunfish catches; white perch "take," good. Pickerel catches were good in late April, early May and the last week of July; fair the rest of the season. Best largemouth catches came the first half of September and mid-October, anglers using live minnows. May and June brought to anglers some of the largest crappie taken in the area for years.

That's the record for last year. Maybe things will be a little different in 1967. If you decide to "huck the odds," we still wish you good luck, but don't say we didn't warn you.

Bird of the Month:

The Osprey

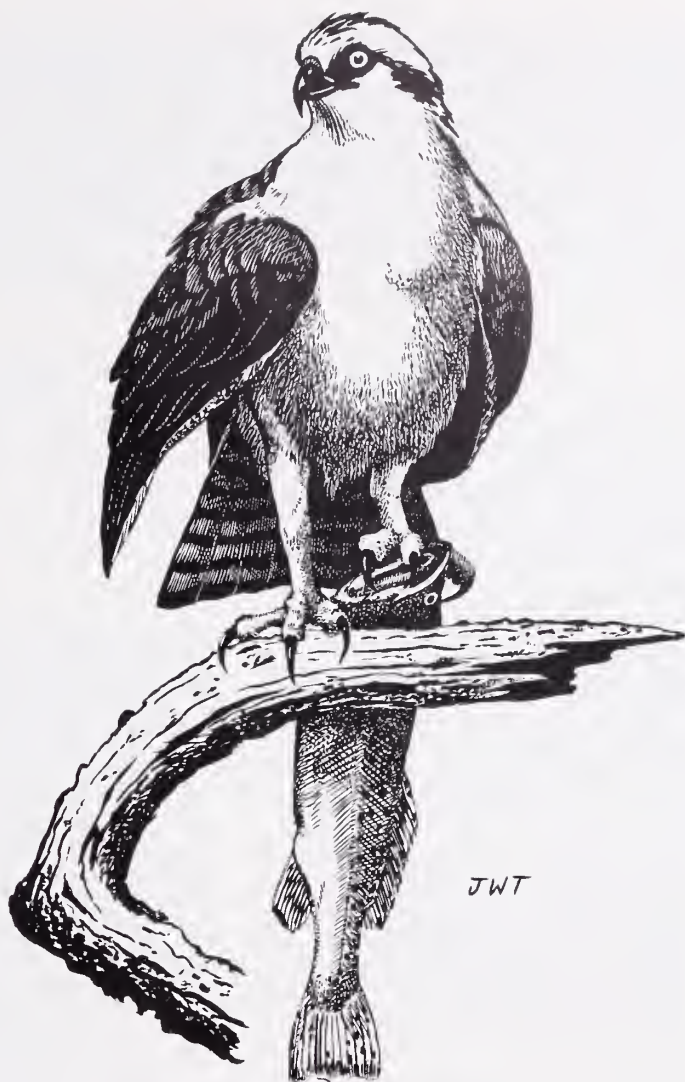
By DR. J. J. MURRAY
Lexington

ON the day this story about the osprey appears in *Virginia Wildlife* we shall already be watching for the bird in the Valley of Virginia. Its earliest visit in spring to Rockbridge County has been on March 27, although early April is more normal. Rockbridge is in the eastbound spring lane of migration, but in fall our visits from this bird are much fewer.

They come through the gaps in the Alleghenies and pause, as any smart tourist will, at Goshen Pass, fish a bit in Maury River, and then make other stops down the rivers to the gap in the Blue Ridge at Balcony Falls. They seem to have good fishing, better fishing indeed than many human anglers beneath them. Sometimes they get sizable fish.

Occasionally, to no good purpose whatever, one is shot. Many years ago a caretaker at a lake east of the Blue Ridge told me that he had shot forty in the preceding year. All this was in a mistaken effort to protect his game fish, not realizing that the osprey in its habit of taking poor species that compete with bass, was affecting his interests far more for good than for harm. It was one of the many instances of ignorant and consequently harmful interference in the processes of nature. The local name of the bird, fish hawk, while entirely appropriate, adds to the misunderstanding.

The osprey is a streamlined bird. Its very long wings have a spread of four and a half to six feet. There is in



this species great variation in the size of individuals. The body is dark above and white below, with some spots, particularly in the female, on the upper breast. The most noticeable field mark is the dark patch in the front center of each wing. There is a good deal of white on the head, so that an inexperienced observer might mistake this hawk for an eagle, though the shape and body size are quite different. The eagle's wing is straight, while that of the osprey is bent.

This is a beautiful bird in flight. The usual note is a high whistle, frequently repeated. There are few birds which have so wide a range. In three or four subspecies, it is found practically throughout the world. Our variety has the high-sounding scientific name of *Pandion haliaetus carolinensis*. The first word comes from the Attic king, Pandion, whose daughters were changed into birds; the second part means "sea eagle"; while the last part refers to South Carolina, from which this variety was first described by Mark Catesby.

Where this bird is common on the coast it nests in many kinds of places but prefers large trees. In Mathews County Dr. John H. Grey and I once found four nests with eggs on duck blinds and one flat on the ground between the rungs of an old ladder. The osprey usually lays three eggs, sometimes two or four. Roughly the size of a hen's egg but very variable in size, they are beautifully marked with chocolate color.



Edited by HARRY GILLAM

Owl shows Wisdom of Attendance



This owl was selected by the Catoclin Elementary School P. T. A. in Leesburg as an award for the class with the most parents attending the P. T. A. meeting. The idea of a mounted animal award was prompted by a Drumming Log item about a mounted bobcat attendance award provided for Abingdon County Elementary School by the Washington County Sportsman's Club. Taxidermist Francis Lee of The Plains prepared the attractive great horned owl mount.

Holliday Lake String



Holliday Lake, a 145 acre impoundment located in the popular recreation area in Buckingham-Appomattox State Forest yielded this pretty string for Mrs. William Parker of Lynchburg.

Now is the time to plant
wildlife food and cover
for better shooting next fall

Minister Bags Trophy Buck



Minister Charles Delaney of Johnson City, Tennessee, bagged this nice buck in Craig County last season. The big buck scored $177\frac{3}{8}$ points by the Boone & Crockett non-typical whitetail measurement system. The antlers measured 23 inches tip to tip and had 21 points.

Nice Mixed String



This fine string of bass and pike were caught by Rupert Knowles, Jr., and his father of Henrico while fishing in Sharp & Cocker Lake in Surry County. The biggest pike measured 26 inches. Fishing rights on this productive lake may be leased by contacting Surry County Sheriff E. O. Cocker.

New Visitor Center at Great Falls



This modern Visitor's Center, especially designed to complement its natural and historic setting at Great Falls, Virginia, is soon to be constructed adjacent to the remains of the old Potowmack Canal. If there are no unforeseen delays, the building should be completed by late fall. Included in the 11,500-square foot building will be facilities for interpretation of Great Falls historic and natural resources, concessionaire services, and park administrative offices. Exhibits showing the development of the Potomac Valley will be installed in the Center, and lectures and films will be presented in the 143-seat auditorium.



Edited by ANN PILCHER



Courtesy The Southside Virginia News

Following successful completion of a 4-hour course sponsored by Dixie Sporting Goods of Petersburg, thirty-seven men and boys received National Rifle Association hunter safety certificates and arm patches. Educational Field Services Coordinator Stuart Newman holds package of arm patches as Dinwiddie Warden Francis Fenderson awards first certificate and patch to Curtis Blair, who had completed a perfect examination paper.

Wildlife In Hiding

Every day factories are being built and rivers dammed. Events such as these lead more and more to the extinction of wildlife in Virginia. Yet, no matter what the conditions, these amazing wild animals do the best they can with what they have. This is a necessity for their survival.

I live in a city of twenty thousand people. Yet, within the city limits, forms of wildlife exist that many people think live only in the dark forests of the Blue Ridge Mountains.

The once beautiful Smith River flows through the southern edge of Martinsville. Only a few miles of this stream are clear. The portion of the river near Martinsville is polluted. Yet many fish still inhabit this stream which once teemed with smallmouth bass. Even a few trout have been caught in this portion, where filth has priority.

In this same area along the river, many forms of wild animal life abound. When walking through a once productive corn field—not over 150 yards from a well-populated street—I have come upon a covey of quail many times. If, one day, I do not see the quail, then I am sure to see a few rabbits hurrying to get out of my way. In the wooded area near the field, it is not uncommon



JOE WEBB

For three consecutive months, Suffolk High School sophomore Joe Webb has been a contributor to the pages of *Virginia Wildlife*. The young writer's work was brought to our attention by his teacher, Mrs. H. Burdge Caton. Also on this page is an article by Martinsville tenth grader, Randy Shank.

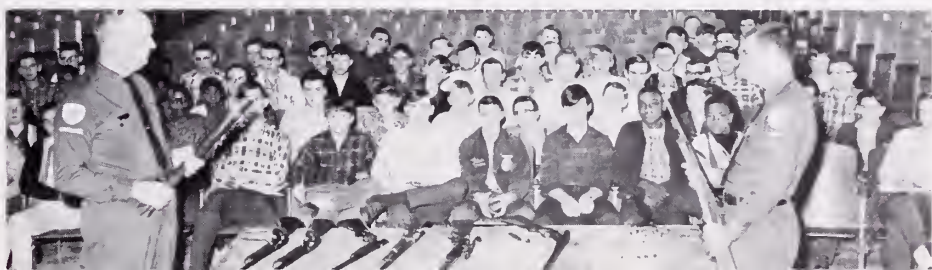
to see squirrels feeding on hickory nuts.

On one occasion, on a crisp December day, I was startled when I heard a sudden "thunder" of wings and a whistling noise. At first I thought it was a quail, but when I saw its long, protruding bill, I knew it had to be the famed woodcock. It was a bird I had heard much about, but one I had never had the opportunity to see.

If one is eager enough to find the many forms of wildlife that do thrive, he can add another one to the list by rising early in the morning. It is at this time of day that the well-known mallards fly

Game Wardens Gordon Preston, left, and Jerry Whittaker conducted a three-hour hunter safety course at Franklin County High School February 1-3, which was attended by approximately 275 members of the school's six vocational agriculture classes.

Courtesy The Franklin News-Post



A Message From Nature

The world is still at six in the morning, and its silence speaks only to the wildlife that lives unnoticed in the woods about us.

It was at this time that I first saw him hunt with a wild excitement that was intoned in the concert of nature, a concert filled with harmonies of a far better life than you or I shall ever know. A young puppy, awkward yet somehow more quiet than most hunters, moved at times slowly and cautiously along the ground. Here he was the tiger stalking; there, an excited young dog, bounding with straightened legs as he hurdled objects rather than dodging them. Perhaps his movement does frighten all game within a mile; still I take him with me whenever I venture forth for a walk with nature.

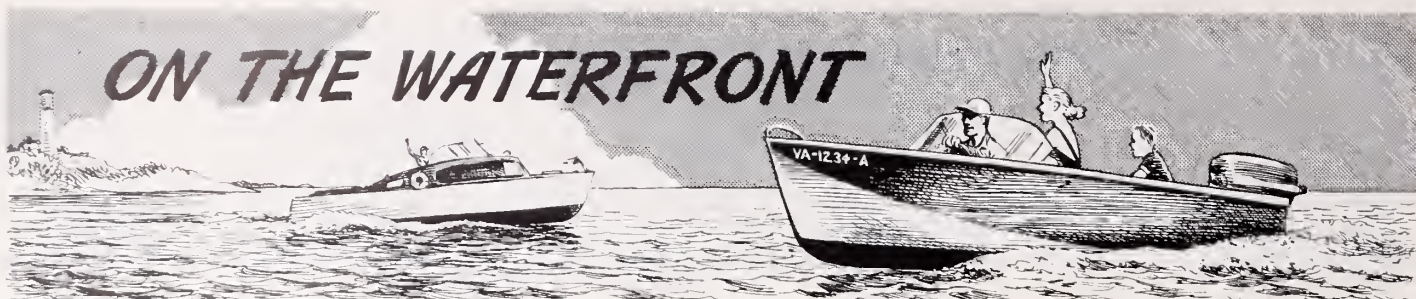
There is something greater than beauty in the forest on a still morning. Something talks to you. You cannot know the feeling until you experience it yourself. It seems a pity that the hurrying businessman cannot buy a little of this elation that the poorest farmer feels—perhaps it's meant to be that way.

—Joe Webb, Grade 10
Suffolk High School

down the river toward their feeding grounds. It is truly a magnificent sight!

The point I make is this: Under extremely adverse conditions, wildlife is trying its best to survive, and seems to be doing a pretty good job of it. However, unless more and more people try to remedy these conditions, our descendants may never know the beauty of a duck in flight, a flushed covey of quail, or that "inner feeling" one gets when a five-pound trout is on the other end of a fishing line.

—Randy Shank, Tenth Grade
Martinsville High School



Edited by JIM KERRICK

Storms Dangerous For Small Boats

The sight of a squall line sweeping toward you over the water is a thrilling sight. But you shouldn't let it make you forget to turn tail and head for shore if you're in a small boat.

Since small craft are the first to be signaled to shore in the event of stormy waters, become familiar with the warnings and heed them immediately.

Head for the closest safe anchorage or landing whenever a storm threatens. Riding a storm might be exciting, but it's too much of a chance.

Try to tie your boat to the downwind side of the dock. This will allow the wind or current to move the boat away from the dock and eliminate possible damage from bumping.

If you do get trapped on the water by a sudden squall, point your bow into (against) the wind. Reduce your speed or take in sail at once.

When you can't make headway against a strong sea, trail a sea anchor from the bow to keep your boat headed into the waves. A bucket will do the job in an emergency.

Spring Boating Checks

The Game Wardens who patrol the waters of the state of Virginia have compiled a list of safety checks suggested for boatmen prior to the spring boating season. Your attention is directed to the items listed below:

1. If the boat is propelled by machinery of 10 horsepower or more, do you have a valid registration or has it expired?
2. Are the boat numbers mounted on the boat and are the numbers at least three inches in height and of the proper contrasting color?
3. Are all the lifesaving devices U. S. Coast Guard approved, in good shape, and is there one on board for each person?
4. Are your fire extinguishers properly charged and of the required size for your boat?
5. Have you checked the hull of your

- boat to determine if it leaks or not?
6. Is the battery charged?
7. Does your motor operate properly?
8. Have all fuel lines been examined to determine if there are any leaks?
9. Have you drained all fuel tanks?
10. Are your lights and sounding equipment working properly?
11. Do you have extra parts for the motor, such as spark plugs and shear pins?
12. Do you have a tool kit for making minor repairs to your motor?
13. Have you checked the steering cables, wheel and motor connections to be sure they are not broken or frayed?
14. Have you determined if your boat requires ventilation? If in doubt contact your marine dealer for guidance.

By checking the above list, it will add to your pleasure, enjoyment and safety of yourself, your family and guests.

Wind and Safe Boating

Wind speed has been measured since the early 1800's by the Beaufort scale, in which arbitrary "force" numerals are assigned to winds of increasing intensity on the basis of their visible effects on the ocean's surface. In recent years meteorologists have depended on the more accurate method of measuring wind speed by the use of anemometers, and commonly define it in "knots," or miles per hour. In his lengthy study of the effects of varying winds on the surface of the open sea, Beaufort assigned them twelve categories, or "forces," from zero (calm) to twelve (hurricane.)

Force "0" indicates no wind, and mirror surface of the water.

Force "1" indicates winds from 1 to 3 knots and ripples on water surface.

Force "2" indicates winds from 4 to 6 knots, light breeze and small wavelets.

Force "3" indicates winds from 7 to 10 knots, gentle breeze and large wavelets, small white caps.

Force "4" indicates winds from 11 to

16 knots, moderate breeze with small waves, numerous whitecaps.

Force "5" indicates winds from 17 to 21 knots, fresh breeze with moderate waves becoming larger, many whitecaps and some spray.

Force "6" and "7" indicate winds from 22 to 27 knots and 28 to 33 knots, respectively, with strong breeze and sea leaps showing white foam in streaks.

Force "8" indicates winds from 34 to 40 knots, fresh gale with moderate high waves of greater length, crests break into spin drift and foam in well marked streaks.

Force "9" indicates winds from 41 to 47 knots, strong gale with high waves; sea begins to roll, reducing visibility.

Force "10" indicates winds from 48 to 55 knots, whole gale with very high waves, white appearance from dense foam streaks, rolling heavily and visibility reduced.

Force "11" indicates winds from 56 to 63 knots, whole gale with exceptionally high waves, sea covered with white foam patches and visibility further reduced.

Force "12" indicates winds from 64 to 71 knots, hurricane winds, air filled with foam, sea all white with driving spray, visibility greatly reduced.

Each small craft operator should keep a weather eye peeled to insure his own and the safety of all of his passengers. Weather can change very quickly from a calm sea to fresh or strong gale. When this happens it is a good idea to head for the nearest port or mooring site.

Where the Buoys Are

The latest charts, maps and other publications, including revised editions of existing charts and data on related navigational material, are now ready.

For Virginia, CS-481, Cape Henry to Thimble Shoal Light (1:20,000—September 1966); CS-400, Hampton Roads (1:20,000—October 1966); and other charts for the navigable waters of Virginia may be obtained from the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey, Washington, D.C.

LETTERS

(Continued from Page 3)

What is Posted Land?

THE reader suggestion that *Virginia Wildlife* should endeavor to "... keep the sportsman informed on all the regulations and laws affecting him as set up by the Virginia General Assembly ..." published in your February 1967 Letters column, is most interesting to me in light of your invitation of questions and your "... "by golly we'll answer 'em" response!

Please understand that I am most assuredly not at this point concerned with the "practicing law without a license" business. I happen to have one but I'm not so sure it was of much help in a recent professional involvement in the old and apparently unsettled problem of WHAT CONSTITUTES POSTED LAND, even though we prevailed. I think your readers may find the following of interest. I encourage reader response and your own "by golly answer" to the problem as it presented itself to me.

Client/hunter was charged with "Hunting On Posted Property Without Written Permission" (Title 29, Section 166) by Warden who found him presumably "in the Act" on rural tract of over 500 acres bounded for over 1½ miles by two public roads along which there were only two No Hunting/Trespassing signs. Client/hunter had had verbal permission from former owner when land was not posted and entered property without exposure to signs which were placed within 62 yards of each other.

Question—What constitutes "Posted Property" in light of frequency and positioning of signs?

Title 29, Section 166 of the Code of Virginia, Hunting On Posted Property Without Written Permission provides:

"... on the lands ... of another upon which signs or posters prohibiting hunting, fishing or trapping, have been placed. ..." No guidelines are mentioned or alluded to regarding interval and location of the signs. This is the Code provision usually made the basis of a charge.

Title 18.1, Section 173 involving Trespass After Having Been Forbidden To Do So is more helpful.

"... by a sign or signs posted on such lands, buildings, premises or part, portion or area thereof at a place or places where it or they may be reasonably seen. ..."

But note that the same section concludes with the provision that;

"This Section shall not be construed to affect in any way the provisions of 29-165 to 29-170."

which, of course, includes that quoted in the paragraph above, and is that under which the usual hunting on posted land charge is brought.

I'm happy to say that the matter resolved itself in a very fair, equitable and proper manner before it became necessary for a full determination. End of the case but not of the problem.

In response to my letter questions your own Chief of the Law Enforcement Division by his letter of December 7, 1966, stated:

"We have always felt that the signs should be so placed that it would be impossible to enter the posted property without seeing one. Some of our Commonwealth Attorneys have advised our officers that the signs are only necessary at the usual places of entrance or accessibility to the property."

The warden involved indicated to me that he had often heard a local judge say that as far as he (the judge) was concerned, Virginia land was automatically posted when the owner paid his taxes on it—or acquired it.

Now, by golly, let's have an answer better than that of "The Reasonable Man" test.

In the event you feel the above to be of interest to your readers, I feel you should not edit it, and that any readers should note that the matter has not been fully researched by this office and that I am not extending any sort of legal advice, and that should he be faced with a related matter of any magnitude whatsoever, he should contact his own attorney immediately.

One need only consider the profound effect of a criminal conviction record, specially in light of the dependence of many upon the acquisition and/or maintenance of a security clearance, to realize that we of the outdoor bar have a problem regarding what constitutes posted land.

Kenward K. Harris
Clifton

P.S. Re "Special Case" (squirrels), February 1967 article, *Virginia Wildlife*, would we have more squirrel shooting and more hunter-hours afield if use of the .22 was encouraged for squirrels? All four pictures of the article indicated use of a shotgun and not even a single shot one at that! For shame! K. K. H.

Our answer to your letter (if not to the specific question, "What constitutes 'Posted Property'?" is that a hunter can avoid being charged with hunting on posted property without permission if he follows three simple rules, no matter how "posted property" is defined: (1) Be sure to know who owns the land; (2) be sure to get the owner's permission; and, (3) when obtaining this permission find out from the landowner himself whether his land is "posted," and whether written permission is therefore required. If anyone knows, he should.

We would add that although the law puts no responsibility upon him in this regard, the landowner who grants oral permission to hunt or fish on his posted property is not doing anyone any favors. If he wants to protect his friends, he will either offer them his permission in writing, or withhold it altogether.

The foregoing advice may be helpful in keeping out of trouble, but not in getting out. That's the only kind of advice we feel competent to give. Once a person is charged with a violation, if he thinks he has a defense with merit, we heartily endorse your excellent advice that "he should contact his own attorney immediately" (but not the Game Commission; we do not have even one lawyer on our staff)!

With respect to the squirrel article: We do not know whether there would be more or less hunter-hours of squirrel hunting if more use were made of the .22 rifle, but we are pretty sure there would be more rounds expended per squirrel brought to bag. Some people prefer to use the .22 rifle for squirrel hunting; others prefer the shotgun. It doesn't seem to make any difference to the squirrels.

We have no evidence that legal hunting pressure, within a properly established hunting season, adversely affects the following fall's squirrel population, and therefore purely from a game management point of view the type of weapon used to harvest the annual surplus is immaterial.—Ed.

Hunting Deer With Dogs

WHILE I can't agree that eastern deer "sport bigger racks" than their western cousins in Virginia, I certainly agree with author Bob Gooch (*Virginia Wildlife*, Dec. 66, "Not to Chase a Deer") that hunting deer with dogs is a sorry sport. The worst fate that could befall a deer is to be run down and killed by dogs.

Too many deer are lost each year to predators, primarily stray dogs, without deliberately setting our "best friend" upon our best big game. In many instances too, the intent appears to be to permit the dog to do what the hunter can't. That is—to hunt on private and posted property, game preserves, wildlife sanctuaries and parks. One clever fellow informed me: "Dogs can't read signs you know."

The use of dogs in deer hunting shows an unsportsmanlike callous disregard, if not contempt, for the quarry and the rights of others.

M. S. Eltzroth
Alexandria

Comments on Squirrel Article

I read with great interest the article "Special Case?" by Joe L. Coggin (*Virginia Wildlife*, February 1967) dealing with the difficulty of setting an early season for hunting squirrels that will be conducive to the best interest of both the squirrel and the squirrel hunter. This is a dilemma that is dear to my hunting heart.

For the past several years in my county (Prince William) our early squirrel season has been from October 1st to the 15th. In 1966 the first two squirrels that I killed had warbles and I, like so many others, left them in the woods to rot. I have too much respect for the animals to waste their bodies this way, so I hung up my squirrel gun until the general season came in. The best possible solution to the problem of an early squirrel season is to have the season before the bot fly lays its eggs and while the squirrels are cutting hickory nuts for the most tasty meat, or so late that the bot fly larva has become dormant for the winter.

George F. Waters, Jr.
Triangle

I thought I would put my two cents' worth in about Mr. Coggin's article about squirrels, which I enjoyed very much. His writing compares very favorably with my own observations. I am about 70 years old, and I have been a hunter and close observer of wildlife since I was a child.

In regard to squirrel migrations, I saw two real ones in my life. One was in McDowell County, West Virginia, and the second one in Raleigh County, West Virginia, and it happened in September. The woods were full of squirrels for about a week but there was not much mast, and when they ate it up they moved on. When the season opened you could seldom find one. I don't know where they came from or where or how far they went, but they were gone.

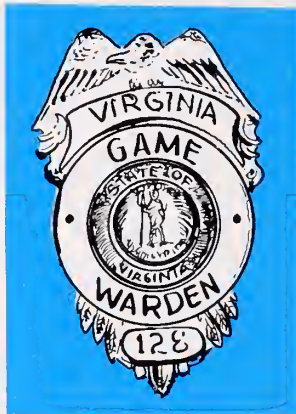
I think you put out a great magazine.

J. B. Good
Appomattox

All in a Day's Work...



Many evenings are spent in providing programs to sportsmen's clubs or youth groups. The warden is a public relations man.



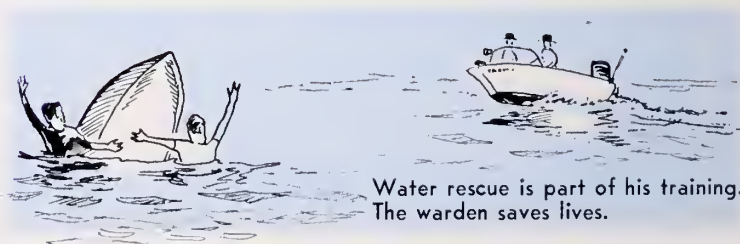
Behind this badge of a Virginia game warden is a man with many qualities—many jobs. These are but a few that are all in a day's work.



Assistance is often given to field men of the Fish and Game Divisions. The game warden is a biologist's aide.



The game warden enforces your fish and game laws. He is a policeman.



Water rescue is part of his training. The warden saves lives.



Hunter safety is taught by the game warden. He is a teacher.

**REPORT VIOLATIONS!
HELP THE WARDEN HELP YOU.**

DRAVER